THE
PLAN OF A SCHOOL,

Commenced February 20, 1764,

BY MRS. MAESE,

In Beaufort-Square, Bath,

YOUNG LADIES

BOARDED AND EDUCATED

On the following Conditions:

Board and Waſhing for Five Guineas per Quarter, and Three Guineas Entrance.

French One Guinea per Quarter, and One Guinea Entrance.

Writing Half a Guinea per Quarter, and Half a Guinea Entrance.

Geography One Guinea per Quarter, and One Guinea Entrance.

Drawing One Guinea per Quarter, and One Guinea Entrance.

Dancing One Guinea per Quarter, and One Guinea Entrance.

Muſic One Guinea and an Half per Quarter, and One Guinea Entrance.

Day Scholars taught to read Engliſh, to read and ſpeak French, and to do various Sorts of Needlework, at One Guinea per Month, and One Guinea Entrance.

CARE will be taken to give the young Ladies a grammatical Knowledge of their own Language; to chuſe ſuch Books, both in Engliſh and French, as may convey Inſtruction to their Minds, at the ſame Time that they aſſiſt them in the Knowledge of the Languages; and various Methods taken to imprint the moſt uſeful Particulars on their Memories. By proper Exerciſes they will be taught to write Engliſh with Eaſe and Propriety, which will lead them to reaſon and reflect, while it improves their Stile. Attention will be given to the Diſpoſitions of the young Ladies; in order, as far as lies in the Power of a School-Miſtreſs, to correct their Faults and cultivate their Virtues. Great Care will alſo be taken to inſtruct them in the Principles of their Religion, and to render them ſenſible of the Extent of moral Duties. The young Ladies, who are of ſufficient age, will be made to keep a Journal of the Employment of every Hour; and, at the End of each Day, the Governeſs will write a Teſtimony of their good or bad Behaviour, that every Parent may judge of the Progreſs made and the Methods uſed in her Daughter's Education, and have an Opportunity of rewarding or diſcountenancing her, as her Conduct ſhall deſerve; which cannot fail of proving more effectual towards the Correction of her Faults, than any Puniſhments inflicted at School.

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THE SCHOOL:

BEING A SERIES OF

LETTERS, &c.

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THE SCHOOL:

BEING A SERIES OF

LETTERS,

BETWEEN

A YOUNG LADY

AND

HER MOTHER.

LONDON:
Printed for W. FLEXNEY, near Gray's-Inn Gate, Holborn.

MDCCLXVI.

BRITISH MUSEUM

PREFACE.

So many things have been publiſhed within theſe few years, with a view of throwing new light on the important affair of education, that I fear I may incur the charge of preſumption in offering any thing on that ſubject to the public; for although it will be readily allowed, that had far more been written, ſtill, in all probability, much more would have remained unſaid, as the ſubject is almoſt inexhauſtible; yet I have too great reaſon to believe that I may be cenſured by ſome, for imagining it in my power to contribute any thing deſerving attention towards ſo neceſſary a work; and the beſt apology I can make may perhaps not be deemed a ſufficient excuſe.

But I have heard, that when the building of a royal palace is intended, every perſon has the liberty of ſending in his plan, on a reaſonable preſumption that ſomething conducive either to ornament or utility, may be found in each of them; and ſuch advantages gathered from inſpecting the different deſigns of various architects, as may enable the undertaker to form a ſtructure with greater

er beauties, and fewer defects, than could be found in the invention of one ſingle perſon.

If ſuch liberty be allowed when the raiſing of an inanimate edifice is intended, with how much greater reaſon ſhould it be permited when the forming the human mind is in queſtion! A work certainly of greater difficulty and much higher importance, as every perfection of the mind is of extenſive uſefulneſs, and every defect productive of numerous evils.—But I ſhould act with little ſincerity were I to pretend that my ſole aim in this publication is only to endeavour at giving ſome ſmall aſſiſtance to the theory of education: I confeſs I have a view to my own convenience and advantage. The perſonages mentioned in the following ſheets are indeed imaginary, but the plan of education is not ideal, being nearly the ſame as that I have followed with the young ladies under my care; but finding the aſſiſtances therein given to their memories, much more laborious both to them and myſelf from being in manuſcript, I wiſhed, for our common eaſe, to have them in print, and at the ſame time not without hope, that a ſcheme of this kind might meet with ſome approvers.

The few tales inſerted are written with a deſign of correcting the faults moſt incident to children, and cultivating the virtues moſt neceſſary

neceſſary for women, in a manner leſs tedious, and conſequently promiſing more utility, than if the ſame precepts were delivered in the form of plain, unembelliſhed advice. If, anſwerable to my hopes, they can likewiſe amuſe my youthful readers, they may prove valuable to many other ſchools as well as my own; for I am perſuaded every one, who conſcientiouſly endeavours to acquit herſelf well in the buſineſs of education; who conſiders herſelf as entruſted with forming the principles and behaviour of the young perſons under her care; and conſequently, in a great degree, anſwerable for their conduct through life, not only to their parents, but to a far ſuperior being: I ſay, I am perſuaded, every one who ſees her office in this juſt, but awful light, muſt perceive, that to find books that will innocently amuſe, is not the leaſt difficult part of her taſk. The moſt decent novels can not be ranked in this number; for the leaſt evil that can be ſaid of them is, that they ſoften the heart, probably of itſelf too tender; teach the readers to ſee moſt circumſtances in life in falſe lights; and to think, that all the colour of their future days muſt ſpring from the good or bad ſucceſs of a paſſion, which it is deſirable few of them ſhould feel. Beſides, as the heroine's virtue riſes in proportion to the dangers to which it has been expoſed

poſed, theſe ſorts of productions familiarize the mind with ſcenes of vice, at an age when one would wiſh to have them totally ignorant of depravity. The Spartans might find the deformity of vice the moſt powerful incitement to virtue, but this will not prove the caſe where vice is followed as the object of choice, not ſubmited to as part of the puniſhment inflicted by a cruel maſter; nor indeed, could any vice but drunkeneſs have appeared with ſuch glaring deformity, as to have rendered the Spartan practice beneficial in any country. The purity and delicacy, which conſtitute the beauty of a female mind, cannot be too long nor too carefully preſerved; and, in ſome degree, muſt ſuffer by the knowlege of vice, however free from the guilt of participation. Thus I have frankly ſhewn the convenience I expect to find in this publication, and I confeſs it will be a pleaſure to me to have the methods I uſe in education well known to the parents of the young ladies who are, or may be truſted to my care, as their approbation would give me great ſatisfaction. If means, which I find anſwer my hopes, ſhall prove of any uſe to other perſons in the ſame way of life with myſelf, I ſhall think it an additional reward for my trouble; as I am much more deſirous that a great number of young ladies ſhould be well educated, than to appropriate

to

to myſelf any methods which may prove conducive to a good education; if any thing therefore in the enſuing ſheets ſhould be found to anſwer that purpoſe, I ſhall rejoice I have communicated it, and ſhall hope it may excuſe my preſumption in venturing to appear in print. But whatever may be the merit of this performance, I muſt not take the ſole, nor the chief part of it to myſelf: a perſon to whom I ſtand much indebted for advice and aſſiſtance on every occaſion, having inſpected, and greatly improved it.

Beaufort-Square, Bath,
March 1766.

SARAH MAESE.

THE

SCHOOL.

PART THE FIRST.

LETTER I.

My dear Mamma,

I WAS much mortified on my arrival laſt night to find the poſt did not go out from hence till to-day, as it prevented my acquainting you more ſpeedily with my ſafe and eaſy journey; eaſy I mean as to the performance, though in a very painful ſtate of mind; but my good friends and fellow-travellers bore with my diſtreſs in the kindeſt manner, and endeavoured as much as poſſible to alleviate it, without being offended at the ill ſucceſs of their endeavours, ſenſible how juſt my cauſe for grief, in having left, for the firſt time, ſo kind, ſo indulgent, ſo beloved a parent.—But if I touch on this ſubject, I ſhall not be able

to obey your commands of giving a circumſtantial account of this ſchool, of all I do, and every thing that paſſes wherein I am concerned; for a heart ſo full as mine, ſhould I give way to its dictates, would not leave me leiſure to attend to circumſtances which as yet ſo little affect it, that they would not ſeem worthy my notice, were it not for your commands. But no ſubject, on which you order me to write, can appear trivial; for your inclination can make the ſmalleſt trifle important: repreſſing therefore my ſenſations, and ſilencing affection, I ſhall exert only my obedience.—I endeavoured by the utmoſt exertion of power over myſelf to compoſe my mind, and aſſume a countenance tolerably eaſy and cheerful, before I arrived at this place, recollecting that ſuch were your commands, as you kindly feared, leſt an appearance of melancholy might diſguſt the governeſſes, by ſhewing the reluctance with which I came to their ſchool.

As ſoon as the coach ſtopped at the door, the two Miſs Wheatleys received me in the moſt obliging manner; and while one of them ſtaid to give orders about my trunks, the other conducted me to her mother, who, with the French teacher, was ſitting at a table. with eleven young ladies around her. They all aroſe at my entrance,

and Mrs. Wheatley, coming forward, embraced me with ſuch an air of humanity, compaſſion, and even tenderneſs, as by reminding me (if I may uſe that term when you had never been out of my mind) of my dear mamma, nearly diſpelled all my aſſumed cheerfulneſs of countenance. Having kindly and politely enquired after my health, ſhe introduced me to her ſcholars, telling them that ſhe was perſuaded ſhe had no occaſion to recommend me to their friendſhip; for that when they had had time to know me, as well as thoſe perſons did from whom ſhe had received my character, it would not be poſſible for them to withhold it from me. But ſhe recommended me to their kindeſt attentions, deſiring they would uſe their beſt endeavours to amuſe me, and make me ſupport, with tolerable ſpirits, my ſeparation from my mother. "To come to a new place, amongſt intire "ſtrangers, (continued ſhe) is a great trial "to a young perſon of ſenſibility; but, "ladies, if you knew the mother ſhe has "left, you would have a very tender com-"paſſion for what ſhe muſt particularly "ſuffer." Obſerving the tears that ſtreamed from my eyes, and my endeavours to conceal them, ſhe dropped the ſubject, called for tea; and, I ſuppoſe, to turn my thoughts, offered to ſhew me the room deſtined for

me. This propoſal indeed was a relief to me, and I gladly attended her. When we returned into the parlour, we found tea waiting for us.

My companions were all very cheerful, and ſhewed the greateſt deſire imaginable to oblige me: their kind aſſiduity could not fail of ſucceſs, and I was in reality much pleaſed with them.—Mrs. and Miſs Wheatleys joined in their mirth with eaſe and good nature, without laying aſide an air of dignity, which I imagine neceſſary in their ſtation; and their ſcholars appeared free and unconſtrained, yet reſpectful. As I bore little part in the converſation, I had the more opportunity to obſerve the behaviour of my companions. I find I am the oldeſt ſcholar by two or three years, and the partner of my room is but nine years old: it is uſual here to put young ladies of very different ages in the ſame chamber, perhaps to avoid the quarrels which might ariſe between girls of nearly equal ages.—Although I liked my company very well, I was glad when the hour for retiring arrived, being a good deal weary both in mind and body; which, together with reflecting that I was in the houſe where you choſe to place me, for reaſons both kind and prudent, diſpoſed me to better reſt than I had enjoyed for ſome nights. I

cannot

cannot yet give you any account of my employments, as the firſt day after a ſcholar arrives, is ſpent in only trying what ſhe has learnt, and what ſhe is fit to learn: this, therefore, muſt be the buſineſs of my next letter; and I ſhall conclude with only deſiring my dear mamma to believe me her moſt tenderly affectionate, and ever dutiful daughter,

MARIA MILTON.

LETTER II.

My dear Mamma,

THE day I laſt wrote, was, as I told you, a day of probation, but on the next I was initiated into the cuſtoms of the ſchool, of which I ſhall give you an account. The days being now long, we are all waked at ſix; and as great cleanlineſs and neatneſs are required of us, we are allowed till ſeven for dreſſing; at which hour we meet in Mrs. Wheatley's dreſſing-room, where ſhe ſays prayers, and two of the ſcholars (all having their ſtated days for it) read a chapter in the Bible each. In the mean time, breakfaſt is prepared in a ſmall room appropriated for that purpoſe; which meal being concluded by eight o'clock, we go into

the ſchool-room. Every young lady by turns reads aloud an hour, half the time in Engliſh, the other half in French: for thoſe who are old enough to underſtand it, ſome hiſtory is choſen, the governeſſes being directed in their choice of books by an uncle of Mrs. Wheatley's, a very learned, ſenſible, and good man, according to the character given me of him. They begin with ancient hiſtory, and proceed in a regular ſeries; the eldeſt Miſs Wheatley compoſing for each of the ladies, out of the part ſhe has read that day, a kind of catechiſm, which ſhe is to get by heart, to imprint the principal facts more ſtrongly on her memory. That you, madam, may the better judge how far this is properly executed, I will here give you a copy both of my yeſterday's and to-day's leſſon, as I ſhall learn with pleaſure, if the method has your approbation, ſenſible that it muſt then be right. I need not ſay that I have begun with the Aſſyrian hiſtory, as it will plainly appear. Thoſe who underſtand French will purſue the ſame ſubject in both languages; ſuch as are more ignorant, read hiſtory only in Engliſh, and in French, fables, or other books ſuited to their capacities, and well calculated to convey ſome moral inſtruction.

HIS-

HISTORICAL CATECHISM.

The firſt Aſſyrian monarchy.

LESSON I.

Queſt. Who is the firſt king mentioned with any certainty in hiſtory?

Anſw. Nimrod.

Q. When did Nimrod live?

A. About the 1800dth year of the world, and 2204 years before Chriſt.

Q. Who was Nimrod?

A. The ſon of Chuſh, the grandſon of Ham, and great grandſon of Noah.

Q. Of what country was he king?

A. Aſſyria; of which monarchy he was the founder.

Q. From whence did Aſſyria receive its name?

A. From Aſſur, ſuppoſed the ſon of Shem, eldeſt ſon of Noah.

Q. What do we know of Nimrod's actions?

A. In general, that after having gained the affections of his people by killing the wild beaſts with which they were infeſted; and, having by the exerciſe of hunting, inured their bodies to hardſhips, and in-

ſpired them with courage, he became a great conqueror.

Q. But what is recorded more particularly of him?

A. That he built Babylon, in the ſame place where Babel had been erected.

Q. Who ſucceeded him in his kingdom?

A. His ſon Ninus.

Q. What is related of Ninus?

A. That he ſubdued Armenia, Media, and Bactria, and moſt part of Aſia.

Q. Who did he marry?

A. Semiramis, the wife of Menon, one of his ſoldiers, from whom he took her; and who, in the violence of his grief, for the loſs of a wife he loved, drowned himſelf.

Q. Where did Ninus firſt ſee Semiramis?

A. At the ſiege of Bactria, where her great beauty and underſtanding, together with her martial ſpirit, concurred to charm him, his ſucceſs in that ſiege being in great meaſure attributed to the wiſdom of her advice, and the valour of her conduct.

Q. Did Ninus build Nineveh?

A. It is not certain whether Nimrod or Ninus built it; but if the latter did not, he at leaſt finiſhed and enlarged it, and made it the greateſt city in the world.

Q. What accounts do ſome authors give of Ninus's death?

A. They

A. They pretend that Semiramis having prevailed on him to reſign the ſovereign command into her hands for a day, ſhe cauſed him to be ſlain, and thus ſecured to herſelf the government; an account which certainly does not wear an air of probability.

LESSON II.

Queſt. Did Ninus leave no ſon?

Anſw. Yes, he left one, whoſe name was Ninyas; but being a child, his mother Semiramis exerciſed the ſovereign power; and ſome ſay, ſhe encouraged his voluptuous diſpoſition, that, immerſed in ſenſuality, he might be the leſs likely to contend with her for the adminiſtration of the kingdom; a wicked and infamous policy, but not the only inſtance of that kind which hiſtory affords among thoſe ambitious princes, who have ſacrificed every principle to their love of power.

Q. What is related of her?

A. The moſt remarkable of her peaceful works are, that ſhe ornamented Babylon, and erected many magnificent buildings; among the reſt, the temple of Belus or Bell, dedicated to the worſhip of Belus or Baal,

and many other idols. On the top was an obſervatory, which by its height aſſiſted the Babylonians in the ſtudy of aſtronomy: but as ſhe did not lay aſide her martial temper when ſhe aſcended the throne, ſhe conquered great part of Ethiopia; ſhe likewiſe invaded India, though without ſucceſs, loſing the greateſt part of her army in that expedition, and being herſelf wounded.

Q. Did her ſubjects ſubmit peaceably to her ſway?

A. We are told that their fear of, and reſpect for her was ſuch, that a tumult being raiſed in the city, and notice brought to her of it while ſhe was dreſſing, ſhe went to the place unarmed, and half dreſſed, and by her preſence intirely appeaſed the ſedition. A ſtatute was erected to her in remembrance of this action.

Q. In what manner did ſhe die?

A. There are different accounts of it; ſome hiſtorians ſay ſhe was killed in India; others, that finding her ſon Ninyas conſpiring againſt her, ſhe voluntarily abdicated the throne, and ſecluded herſelf from the ſight of all men, having been told by an oracle, that ſhe ſhould reign proſperouſly till ſuch time as her ſon entered into a conſpiracy againſt her.

Q. Have there not been ſome fabulous additions made to her ſtory?

A. Yes,

A. Yes, many: ſhe is ſaid to have been metamorphoſed into a dove, and under that form to have been worſhipped by the Aſſyrians.

Q. Was Ninyas's conduct leſs diſſolute after he aſſumed the government, than during his mother's reign?

A. No, he continued the ſame effeminate manners; and, ſenſible of his own demerits, he feared the effects of his people's contempt, and for his ſecurity kept a conſiderable body of forces about his perſon, collected from all parts of his empire; theſe he changed yearly, to prevent any dangerous cabals, and placed at their head commanders, on whoſe fidelity he could rely.

Q. Was Ninyas ſucceeded by princes more worthy than himſelf?

A. For thirty generations after Ninyas, the kings of Aſſyria diſtinguiſhed themſelves ſo little, that not one action of theirs is recorded; and during ſome of their reigns it was, that Seſoſtris, king of Egypt, extended his conqueſts ſo far in the Eaſt. The firſt action of any conſequence related of an Aſſyrian monarch after Ninyas, is the account left us in Scripture of the aſſiſtance given by Pul to the king of Nineveh, who repented at the preaching of Jonah.

Q. Who is ſaid to have ſucceeded Pul?

A. Sar-

A. Sardanapolus; in whom the firſt kingdom of Aſſyria ended.

On Mondays and Thurſdays, geography is taught for an hour in the morning; on Tueſdays and Fridays, muſic; on Wedneſdays and Saturdays, drawing. Every day we write after copies for half an hour; we learn French and Engliſh grammar by heart, each half an hour; all who are of ſufficient age, either write in their own words ſome ſtory they have read, a letter, an eſſay, or kind of theme, on ſome ſubject choſen by themſelves, from ſeveral offered to them; which the governeſſes afterwards examine, correct the ſtyle, and rectify the turn of thought, where erroneous; fully explaining their objections, and making the ſcholar underſtand the faults. Theſe things employ us till half an hour after twelve o'clock, when we break up ſchool. At one we dine, and at three repair again into the ſchool-room, when we learn the hiſtorical catechiſm; and on Mondays and Thurſdays the geographical.—Each reads half an hour, and every afternoon learns a ſmall portion of the church catechiſm till perfect; to which precedes a longer, peculiar to this ſchool.

Theſe things, with work, fill up the time till ſix o'clock, when, if the weather is air,

fair, we all (with one or both the Miſs Wheatleys) walk till eight; if it rains, we dance, or join in ſome play which gives us equal exerciſe; then ſup; and ſoon after we read a chapter in the Bible; prayers are ſaid, and we retire to reſt. Thoſe who learn only part of the things taught here, fill up the time with work, or ſpend more in the things they do learn. But having mentioned the geographical catechiſm, I will likewiſe give you a ſpecimen of it in my firſt leſſon.

GEOGRAPHICAL CATECHISM.

LESSON I.

Queſt. What is geography?

Anſw. Geography is a deſcription of the ſurface of the earth, or, as it is often called, from being compoſed of earth and water, the terraqueous globe. The artificial globe is a kind of picture or repreſentation of the earth, and you may perceive that it is in like manner divided into water and land, and the latter again ſubdivided into different countries.

Q. What is the axis of the earth?

A. The axis of the earth is an imaginary line paſſing through the middle, or centre

of

of the earth, round which it is all ſuppoſed to turn once in twenty-four hours.

Q. What are the poles?

A. The two extremities, or ends of the axis, are called the poles, from a Greek word ſignifying *to turn:* the North pole is named the Arctic, from a word in the ſame language, ſignifying *a bear*, becauſe the ſtar in the end of the conſtellation, called the Little Bear, is ſuppoſed to be the real North point, or pole, in the heavens; and this ſtar is therefore called the Pole Star.

Q. What is the South pole called?

A. The South pole is called the Antarctic pole, from two Greek words, ſignifying *contrary to the bear*, as being directly oppoſite to the arctic, or North pole.

Q. How many great circles are there?

A. Four; the horizon, the meridian, the equator, and the ecliptic, or the zodiac.

Q. What is the horizon?

A. The horizon is the broad flat circle, or top of the wooden frame wherein the globe ſtands; the upper end of which divides it into upper and lower hemiſpheres.

Q. What is the meaning of the word hemiſphere?

A. Hemiſphere means half a ſphere, or globe, one half being above the horizon or wooden circle, the other half below it; the one is termed the upper, the other the lower

lower hemiſphere. By the horizon is ſometimes meant the ſenſible, and ſometimes the rational horizon.

Q. From whence is the word horizon derived?

A. From a Greek word ſignifying *to bound*, or *terminate*.

Q. What is meant by the ſenſible horizon?

A. By the ſenſible or apparent horizon, is meant that circle which limits or bounds our proſpect, and is the utmoſt extent of our ſight every way round us, either at land or ſea:—That circle, in ſhort, where the land or ſea, and the heavens ſeem to meet, as they appear to do at our utmoſt point of view.

Q. You will obſerve, that according to this definition, which I believe is a juſt one, ſcarcely any two places have exactly the ſame horizon: your's and your next neighbour's in ſome ſmall degree will differ; for it can ſcarcely happen but that one of you will have rather a larger extent of proſpect to the North or South, Eaſt or Weſt, than the other enjoys; but, as the difference is ſmall, it is ſufficient for the exactneſs of calculations, to fix the horizon at particularly diſtinguiſhed places. What is the rational or true horizon?

A. It

A. It is that circle which would be the horizon to a perſon placed in the centre of the earth, and would then, like the wooden circle round the globe, divide the earth into two equal hemiſpheres.

Q. What is the purpoſe of the circles marked on the horizon?

A The inner edge is divided into 360 equal parts, or degrees, or twelve times thirty; whereon we number the degrees of the ſigns, or conſtellations, whoſe figures are in the circle under it. Next to this comes an account of the year, divided into the ſeparate months, according to the old ſtile, when the year began eleven days later than by the preſent computation by the new ſtile, which is but lately become general in this kingdom: the account of which is on the next circle. On the laſt, is all the diviſions of the mariner's compaſs, the ſeveral points of the wind.

You know, madam, I never was particularly ready at learning by heart, therefore theſe catechiſms at preſent appear to me a little tedious, but I hope practice will render the taſk more eaſy, as the memory, like all other things, ſtrengthens by exerciſe. Nor can I repine at a little trouble of this ſort; for, as Mrs. Wheatley obſerves, it is what we remember, not what we

we have read, that conſtitutes knowledge; therefore my time cannot be more profitably employed than in imprinting on my mind whatever is worthy of remembrance, and a little reading, thus deeply engraven on the memory, is preferable to whole volumes curſorily peruſed. I have heard you make the ſame obſervation, which gives it double weight with, dear Madam, your moſt dutiful and affectionate daughter,

MARIA MILTON.

LETTER III.

From Mrs. MILTON to her Daughter.

My dear Maria,

FROM how great anxiety was I relieved by the letter, wherein you acquainted me with your ſafe arrival at Mrs. Wheatley's; and of your agreeable reception there. Neither was the next much leſs pleaſing to me, which contained an account of the method of inſtruction purſued in the ſchool; a method perfectly anſwerable to my wiſhes, and from which I make no doubt but you will receive improvement, beyond what in reaſon, perhaps, I ought to expect; but parents are apt to go beyond the ſuggeſti-

ons

ons of that cold monitor, in every hope which is founded on their good opinion of their children. Few parents, I ſuppoſe, will allow themſelves to be therein actuated by partiality; but I flatter myſelf I may be better defended from this accuſation than many others, as my long experience of the docility of your temper, the ſoundneſs of your underſtanding, and the purity of your principles, may well juſtify all the hopes my fondneſs can form. I will not ſay how mortifying it is to me, no longer to be the daily witneſs of your improvements: the ſubject is too melancholy; and to indulge myſelf in lamenting it, would be acting in direct oppoſition to that duty which commands me to acquieſce patiently in ſo grievous a trial; and the perſuaſion that you will not materially ſuffer in a ſeparation, to me ſo painful, is no ſmall ſupport to my afflicted mind. But, although I have a perfect confidence in the care of the excellent women to whom you are intruſted, yet I ſhould think myſelf deficient in the attention you deſerve from me, were I to omit any admonitions which may poſſibly be of uſe to you.

You are now, my dear, to conſider yourſelf as one of a large ſociety, wherein you may expect to find as great a variety of tempers as of faces: it is neither poſſible

ſible nor deſirable that they ſhould be all equally agreeable to you; all may not deſerve your eſteem, few will obtain your friendſhip, but every one has a juſt title to your civility: let this extend to all. I do not confine my meaning to mere verbal courteſy; this, perhaps, is all that can be given to tranſient viſitants, but you cannot fail of finding opportunities of doing little ſervices to thoſe with whom you live; be not only careful never to omit thoſe opportunities, but diligently ſeek them, for in a mutual intercourſe of kind, though ſmall ſervices, conſiſt the greateſt pleaſures of this life. Conſiderable benefits we ſeldom can confer, nor are they often wanted; but by kind attentions, and ſmall ſervices, you may add to the pleaſures of every individual: all are in a capacity of receiving them, and every one has the power of conferring them. To ſay it is our duty to do ſo, is ſuperfluous, for I have ſaid it already, in obſerving that it is productive of happineſs; for to contribute to the eaſe and comfort of others, as far as lies within our power, is the great duty of our lives; and that it is our intereſt, our worldly intereſt, is no leſs obvious, ſince it engages a return; for thoſe who find that our regard for others extends no farther than verbal civility, will think themſelves fully acquitted towards us, when

they

they repay us in obliging expreſſions and civil words. I need not obſerve, that theſe kind offices I recommend muſt not be ſuch as will interfere with more weighty obligations; for if we perform them, as we ought to do every action, in conſideration of the obedience due to him who has ordered us to love our neighbours as ourſelves, there is no danger of their claſhing with any thing more important. When all our actions ſpring from the ſame pure ſource, they will not interfere with each other; ſuch diſſonance is produced only by jarring and contrary motives.

This univerſal civility and endeavour to ſerve, I recommend as the rule of your general conduct; but your heart is too much diſpoſed to affection, not to feel a tenderer ſenſibility towards ſome of your companions than towards others; a ſenſation founded on their virtues and their behaviour; for if the latter is not pleaſing, virtue will not gain our affection, though it may excite our eſteem. Theſe particular connexions I would even recommend to you; but then, my dear Maria, I muſt exhort you to examine the perſons with whom you thus connect yourſelf ſo carefully, as may give you reaſon to hope the intimacy may continue ſo long and ſo perfect as to deſerve the name of friendſhip.

Birth

Birth and fortune are the circumſtances you ſhould leaſt conſider. Noble, generous, diſintereſted minds, are to be found in all ranks, in all ſtations, and of all ages. A perſon of obſcure birth may be poſſeſſed of the brighteſt virtues, and thereby become, in what conſtitutes the only real inequality, your ſuperior. If, on the contrary, a young perſon of quality attracts you by the amiableneſs of her diſpoſition, do not let her rank deter you from ſeeking to cultivate an intimacy with her; for if her mind deſerves your good opinion, her rank will be no obſtacle: if you cannot riſe to her, ſhe will ſtoop to you. But, my dear, if you ſhould be weak enough (which I can ſcarcely ſuſpect) to dangle after a lady of quality merely becauſe ſhe is ſuch, and that it ſooths your vanity to be thought one of her acquaintance; or if you contract intimacies with perſons beneath you, only becauſe they flatter and indulge you in your follies, do not wonder if the firſt after ſome little time grows tired of you, and endeavours to throw you at a diſtance, except you meanly ſubmit to become either her fool or her flatterer; or if the ſecond, to effect ſome baſe purpoſes of their own, ſhould lead you into ſuch a conduct, and ſuch ſort of company, as muſt make you

not only deſpicable, but miſerable, for the remainder of your life.

Young perſons are apt to be too haſty in their concluſions; be not overforward to form a judgment; time and nice obſervation ſhould precede it; and do not let vanity, ſometimes by ourſelves miſcalled gratitude, make you think more favourably of the temper or diſpoſition of any one from their particular behaviour to you. Obſerve what it is to others: if haughty, inſolent, ſelfiſh, captious, or diſobliging, no matter how generous, kind, or condeſcending to you; conſider it but as caprice and whim, and as deſtitute of all foundation in reaſon, conſequently not to be depended upon. The temper, which now teazes others, will, when the whim is paſt, become your tormentor. Nothing ſhould more deter you from forming an intimacy than ill humour: an ill-natured perſon can neither be juſt nor generous; influenced by their temper, they ſee every thing in a falſe, conſequently an unjuſt light, and are, at times, ſenſible of no pleaſure but what their cruelty finds in afflicting others. Selfiſhneſs is the bane of private friendſhips as well as the curſe of ſociety, but by ſlight obſervers often paſſes long undiſcovered. Generoſity is its oppoſite; but many get the character of generous, even for ſelfiſh actions. Giving

is frequently looked upon as an infallible proof of generoſity; when ſometimes, on the contrary, the end aimed at is to purchaſe ſlaves,—to force the obliged, by the favours conferred on them, to dedicate themſelves to their ſervice. Some by vanity are induced to give; others, leſs blameable, by a good nature, which feels an immediate pleaſure in communicating, but has ſo little of true generoſity in it, that after the firſt impulſe is paſt, they will repent of what they have done, and ſecretly wiſh they could reſume their gift.

To diſtinguiſh true generoſity, this is the beſt rule that occurs to me; meaſure it not by the favours people confer, but by the ſenſe they entertain of them: if they think they have done ſome great matter, it is plain it coſt them much to do it; from whence we may judge there was not much generoſity in the action; for whatever comes from that ſource, flows ſpontaneous, coſts no effort, and therefore appears little more than a common action to the obliger. If perſons are deſirous to enhance their favours, and to prevent their being overlooked, it is plain they have a view beyond what actuates the generous perſon; for ſuch an one aims only at giving pleaſure; and, if it would be more pleaſing, would even wiſh to confer favours in ſuch a man-

a manner, that they ſhould ſeem to ariſe only from the natural courſe of events, independent of their particular agency. If, therefore, you ſee a perſon entertain a high ſenſe of the ſervices ſhe has rendered to another, or a mean one of thoſe ſhe has received, if ſhe endeavoured to raiſe the one, and depreciate the other in your eſtimation, is diligent to make known to the perſon benefited all ſhe has done to ſerve her, and expects much gratitude in return, be aſſured, that though ſhe may liberally give, and aſſiduouſly ſerve others, ſhe is a ſtranger to that true generoſity of mind which ſhould attach us, and will be the firmeſt baſis of a real friendſhip and amiable ſociety: to which I ſhall only add, that we are not to form our opinions of a perſon's diſpoſition from their ſet diſcourſes, but from ſudden emotions, which exclude the concealments of cunning; people then making the beſt diſcoveries of themſelves, when they are off their guard.

In your youthful aſſociates, the favours conferred can ſeldom be pecuniary; but what I have ſaid is equally applicable to the kind ſervices I have recommended to you, and which I imagine muſt be continually paſſing in ſo well regulated a ſchool.

I truſt the importance of my ſubject, and the ſincere affection from whence all I have

ſaid

ſaid ariſes, will excuſe to you the length of a letter, which, to moſt young people, would appear a heavier taſk than any impoſed by the governeſſes; but, encouraged by my knowledge of you, I have written fully and freely, perſuaded that no other recommendation is neceſſary than its being the dictates of the anxious heart of, my dear Maria, your moſt tenderly affectionate mother,

FRANCES MILTON.

LETTER IV.

From Miſs MILTON to her Mother.

My dear Mamma,

IT would grieve me much to think that you could ſuſpect me of being tired with the peruſal of your kind letter. Every line written by your hand gives me the moſt ſenſible pleaſure; but that is ſtill increaſed, when thoſe lines convey to me your excellent inſtructions. Though a bad heart may ſometimes recoil at good advice, yet I imagine our moſt perverſe inclinations cannot often ſo far blind us as to prevent our ſeeing that the advice is good; but when it comes from a kind and

tender parent, all doubt muſt be removed; we muſt know their years have taught them experience; and their parental care enſures to us their kind intentions; to their inſtructions we may liſten with ſafety, and with much advantage follow them. The beſt manner in which I can ſhew my gratitude for thoſe you have been ſo good as to give me, is to endeavour to regulate my conduct by them; and this I can ſincerely promiſe. If the good conſequences you have reaſon to hope from them do not prove anſwerable, the failure ſhall not proceed from a deficiency of obedience: for that I can engage, though I am not able to preſerve myſelf from an error in judgment, from which even perhaps your prudent counſels may not entirely ſecure me; how then could I conduct myſelf with tolerable propriety, if deprived of the aſſiſtance of ſo excellent a guide? But as many words are but ſmall proofs of ſincerity, I will ſay no more on the ſubject, but leave my actions to ſpeak for me, and proceed to things leſs important.

I have been for ſo many years uſed to tell you every thing I ſaw, or that occurred to my mind, that I fear I may frequently trouble you with a great deal of impertinence; for I find a conſtant inclination to communicate every incident, however trifling.

ſling. Poſſibly among that number ought to be included a ſcene, at which I was preſent yeſterday; but it pleaſed me, therefore I will venture to relate it; it requires, however, ſome preface. Miſs Cummings, the chief perſon concerned, is eleven years old, and has been here ſix months; during which time, her great ſtudy has been to teaze her ſchoolfellows, tho' with but moderate ſucceſs. If any of them were guilty of the ſmalleſt fault, ſhe was never at reſt till ſhe had told it, with every poſſible exaggeration and addition, to the governeſſes: but the greateſt object of her malice was Miſs Menil, a young lady of about thirteen years of age; whoſe beauty and ſweetneſs of diſpoſition particularly excited her envy. Her ill-nature gave more trouble to the governeſſes, than to the perſons whom it was deſigned to teaze; for, as they have told me, it reduced them frequently into a very aukward dilemma; they could not chide her as they wiſhed, ſince that was giving countenance to the faults of which ſhe informed them; nor could they be angry at the offenders, without encouraging her bad diſpoſition; ſo that the beſt they could do, was to ſeem moderately diſpleaſed with both, and to endeavour by every means, ſuch as fables, little ſtories, and reflections, thrown into

converſation, to convince her how odious ſuch a diſpoſition muſt render every perſon who indulged it: but it was all in vain; ſhe felt a conſciouſneſs of not being amiable, and ſaw the reſt of the ſcholars more ſo; therefore was contented while her governeſſes were diſpleaſed with any other, though certain to have the largeſt ſhare of their diſpleaſure. So much for my preface. Yeſterday morning it happened that Miſs Cummings really committed a great fault, which ſhe knew could not be kept from the knowledge of the governeſſes, and was equally ſenſible that ſhe muſt not expect any favour from them. She wanted ſome of the ſcholars to plead in her behalf; but all whom ſhe aſked, refuſed her; replying, they wondered ſhe could expect them to mollify the reſentment of the governeſſes, after having ſo often endeavoured to render them the object of it. This wretched girl grew quite in deſpair. The conſciouſneſs of deſerving this treatment encreaſed her vexation: ſhe had room neither for hope nor complaint; ſhe was ſilenced by the replies that had been made her; but her countenance expreſſed great anguiſh of mind; (for the governeſſes anger is greatly dreaded by all, as it is rare, and always juſt) —when Miſs Menil ſaid, "Miſs Cummings, you have not aſked me

"to

" to intercede for you." " No," anſwered the poor creature, " I am ſure you would " not; for you have the moſt reaſon to " refuſe me." " To ſhew you," replied Miſs Menil, " how much you are miſ- " taken, I give you my word I will uſe my " beſt endeavours for you. If, when I ſee " you in this diſtreſs, I could not for- " give, I ſhould deſerve all you have done " by me. I ſincerely wiſh, my dear, to " cure the diſpoſition by which I have ſuf- " fered; but I ſhould be very ſorry to " puniſh you for it. Till now, you never " knew how very painful it is to incur " the diſpleaſure of our governeſſes, there- " fore were ignorant of the uneaſineſs you " created. When the caſe becomes our " own, we feel with the utmoſt ſenſibility; " this ignorance, and your want of con- " ſideration, in part, make your excuſe; " and, what you at preſent ſuffer, eraſes " all remembrance of paſt injuries." Then, taking her by the hand, and kiſſing her, ſhe continued, " Compoſe yourſelf, my " dear: I will go directly, and try what I " can do in your behalf."

Miſs Cummings immediately threw her arms about Miſs Menil's neck, and burſt into the moſt violent paſſion of crying: " You break my heart," ſaid ſhe, " with " your goodneſs: how you make me hate

" myſelf! Is it poſſible you can endeavour " to pacify their anger againſt me, when I " have ſo often attempted to make them " angry with you! I thought you would " have been glad to have ſeen me diſ- " graced; but I find I did not know you: " I judged of you by myſelf. Oh! what " a heart I have! This hurts me more " than all their anger."

The poor girl was quite inconſolable, and would not part with Miſs Menil out of her arms. I ſaw no end of her gratitude to Miſs Menil, nor of her abhorrence of herſelf; therefore, as the ſhorteſt way to deliver them both, I ſtole out of the room, ran to the governeſſes, told them, in few words, what had paſſed, and brought them to ſee the conſequences. They found the two girls almoſt blinded with their tears; for Miſs Menil was ſo touched with Miſs Cummings's behaviour, that ſhe could not reſtrain her's; and the governeſſes, with viſible pleaſure in their countenances, beheld them ſome time, before their preſence was perceived; but as ſoon as Miſs Menil ſaw them, ſhe broke from the poor offender, and, with the utmoſt eagerneſs, entreated them, for her ſake, to forgive a fault Miſs Cummings had committed, or ſhe ſhould be miſerable. Mrs. Wheatley, taking her in her arms, ſaid, " My dear,

" I have

" I have heard the whole: I ſhould indeed
" have been very angry with Miſs Cummings
" for what ſhe has done: I do not know
" whether I ſhould not have expelled her
" the ſchool, as no one has deſerved ſo
" little lenity; but your interceſſion makes
" her peace at once: I can refuſe nothing
" to one ſo generous; the nobleneſs of
" your mind charms me: thus ever re-
" turn injuries, and you will never be
" twice hurt by the ſame perſon: ſuch
" conduct muſt overcome the worſt na-
" tures; but, if it ſhould not, it is an ex-
" erciſe of your own virtues, which muſt
" be ever pleaſing and ſatisfactory. For-
" giveneſs is our duty; our daily prayer
" requires a conſtant practice of it, ſince
" otherwiſe we are ſealing, as it were, our
" own condemnation. It is likewiſe much
" for our peace here: reſentment is the
" moſt turbulent inmate of the breaſt, and
" is always a much greater evil than the
" injury received. I may be externally
" hurt, but no one can, without my own
" conſent, throw my whole mind into diſ-
" order, and change the peaceful quiet
" which ſhould dwell there, into that tor-
" menting ſtate to which reſentment, and
" a deſire of revenge, reduces it. As for
" you Miſs Cummings, I ſhall ſay little,
" becauſe I ſee you already feel ſo much;

" and I aſſure you, my dear, I ſincerely
" rejoice you have ſo proper a ſenſibility on
" the occaſion: this, at once, excuſes all
" your faults, as I am ſure it will conquer
" them; for I am well perſuaded, that,
" even after the firſt emotion is over, you
" will continue to ſee, that every attempt
" to give pain to others is criminal: that
" our duty here is to alleviate every uneaſi-
" neſs of mind, every diſtreſs of what-
" ſoever kind, as far as our ſphere of ac-
" tion extends: this, not only humanity
" and generoſity require of us, but re-
" ligion exacts it; for do not imagine,
" my dear ladies, that religion is concerned
" only in actions of great and weighty im-
" portance: there is not the ſmalleſt ar-
" ticle in our conduct, which ought not to
" be directed thereby: our converſation,
" every thing we do or think, ſhould be
" regulated by it; and, till it obtains this
" power, we deceive ourſelves, if we ima-
" gine we are truly religious. Every age
" has its trifles; the play of children, and
" the common purſuits of thoſe of riper
" years, are all, properly conſidered, tri-
" fling: do not ſuppoſe then that religion
" is not equally to take place in your
" hearts, and to regulate all your actions
" in the ſame manner as if you were more
" advanced in life. If religion is out of

" the

" the queſtion, the moſt ſerious purſuits are
" mere trifles, when, under the regula-
" tion that religion preſcribes, the ſmalleſt
" actions become important. Whatever
" can give an innocent pleaſure to another,
" we ſhould not omit; whatever gives
" pain, is extremely criminal: it is a
" crime too, for which we ſoon feel the
" puniſhment. The happineſs of man-
" kind, next to the favour of the Almighty,
" which only ſhines on the benevolent,
" depends on an interchange of good of-
" fices: we cannot expect to receive good
" from others, if we do not return it to
" them: if we are cruel or malicious, the
" general run of mankind will hate us;
" the beſt, tho' they will not hate, will
" avoid us; we ſhall live, without the com-
" forts, the aſſiſtances of friendſhip, an
" unſocial life in the midſt of multi-
" tudes. No one can love thoſe in whom
" there is nothing lovely: beauty may
" raiſe ſome favourable prejudice in the
" beholders; wit may amuſe; good ſenſe
" may pleaſe; but the amiable qualities
" of the heart can alone create affection:
" theſe, I am perſuaded, my dear Miſs
" Cummings, we ſhall henceforth ſee daily
" ſhine forth in you: hitherto they have
" been ſuppreſſed by faults in your diſpo-
" ſition, which, for want of being pro-

" perly eradicated by early care, had
" grown to ſuch a height, as to overſha-
" dow your virtues: but your preſent ſen-
" ſations ſhew, that altho' they have been
" concealed, they are not extinguiſhed;
" and now they have once broken forth,
" I make no doubt but they will increaſe,
" and add both to your own happineſs,
" and that of your ſchoolfellows; and not
" leſs to mine, who find my greateſt plea-
" ſure in the good diſpoſitions of my young
" friends."

Miſs Cummings experienced the happy effects of the promiſing appearances of a more amiable conduct during the whole day, every one behaving to her with a degree of tenderneſs, which had not hitherto been ſhewn her; as ſhe, from the firſt, had damped all good will; but this rather depreſſed, than raiſed her ſpirits: ſhe ſeemed much affected with the recollection of her own miſconduct, and overpowered with the generous forgiveneſs of others; and I make no doubt, but Miſs Menil's generoſity, together with the encouragement given Miſs Cummings by the governeſſes, will work an entire change in her diſpoſition. If this ſhould be the caſe, what a bleſſed event to her! And how great a happineſs to Miſs Menil, when ſhe reflects on the reformation

formation ſhe has wrought! But it is time I ſhould now tranſcribe my leſſons.

HISTORICAL CATECHISM.

LESSON III.

Queſt. Great doubts have been raiſed concerning the truth of the Aſſyrian hiſtory, even to the time of Tiglath Pileſer; but, in theſe diſtant events, the reality of the facts recorded is of leſs conſequence to common readers, than that they ſhould not be ignorant of ſuch as have been related as truth, and which are more eaſily cavilled at than confuted; things ſo far removed from our own time admitting of no certain proof, nor of an abſolute confutation, conſequently are not worth the trouble of diſputation. What account is left us of Sardanapalus?

Anſ. It had been uſual for the Aſſyrian kings to ſhut themſelves up in their palace from the ſight of all their ſubjects, except their attendants; but Arbaces, governor of Media (a province of Aſſyria) deſpiſing the inactive life of his prince, forced his way into Sardanapalus's apartment, where he found him ſpinning of wool, in female apparel, with his women.

Q. What effect had this on Arbaces?

A. He immediately proclaimed the king's effeminate and diſſolute conduct, and made an alliance with Beleſis, governor of Babylon. They agreed to divide the kingdom between them, and accordingly, having defeated the king's troops, and reduced him to ſhut himſelf up in Nineveh, they beſieged that city.

Q. With what ſucceſs?

A. The ſiege proved long; but, at laſt, the river Tigris overflowed, and having thrown down the walls of the city for two miles and an half in length, the town became defenceleſs. The courage which Sardanapalus had unexpectedly made appear, was now changed into deſperation; and, to avoid falling into the hands of his rebellious ſubjects, he ſet his palace on fire, and was therein conſumed, with his women, his principal attendants, and his treaſures.

Q. Is there not a reaſon given for Sardanapalus's ſo vigorouſly reſiſting his rebel ſubjects, that does no very great honour to his courage?

A. He is ſaid to have been perſuaded of the impoſſibilty of their ſucceſs, by an oracle, which foretold, that Nineveh ſhould never be taken, till the river that ſurrounded it became its enemy: as he foreſaw no means how this could ever be, he imagined

imagined himſelf ſecure, till the inundation ſeemed to indicate to him, that the time alluded to by the oracle was come; and he then gave up all thoughts of making a longer defence.

Q. At what time did the firſt Aſſyrian monarchy end by the death of Sardanapalus?

A. In the year 747 before the birth of our Saviour, according to ſome accounts; but chronologiſts differ extremely as to the time of this event, as well as of many others; ſome placing it above an hundred and forty years earlier.

HISTORICAL CATECHISM.

Second Aſſyrian Monarchy.

LESSON IV.

Queſt. What followed the deſtruction of Sardanapalus?

Anſ. His kingdom was divided; Aſſyria and Media ſubmitted to Arbaces, by ſome called Ninus the younger; and therefore miſtaken for two perſons; and Beleſis reigned over Babylon.

Q. What names are given them in Scripture?

A.

A. Arbaces is there called Tiglath Pileſer; and Beleſis, Baladan; he has often borne the name of Nabonaſſar; and the beginning of his reign was an era from which the Babylonians frequently computed their years.

Q. What actions are recorded of Arbaces, or Tiglath Pileſer?

A. Ahaz, king of Juda, having aſked his aſſiſtance againſt the kings of Iſrael and Syria, and promiſing, in return, to become his vaſſal, Tiglath conquered the kings of Iſrael, Syria, and Damaſcus, and annexed great part of their dominions to his own; thus putting an end to the antient Syrian monarchy, of which we have no account, but what is mentioned in the Bible of their wars with the Jews.

Q. Was not the deſtruction of Damaſcus foretold by ſome of the prophets?

A. Yes; in the 8th chapter and 4th verſe of Iſaiah; and the 1ſt chapter and 5th verſe of Amos.

Q. What benefit did Ahaz receive from Tiglath Pileſer?

A. None; he remained deprived of part of his territories, and Tiglath obliged him to deliver up all his treaſures, and acknowledge him his ſovereign.

Q. Who ſucceeded Tiglath?

A. His ſon Salmaneſer, who ſubdued the Iſraelites, and took away the golden calves

calves they had adored; upon which they returned to the worſhip of the true God. The Iſraelites having afterwards rebelled, Salmaneſer again conquered them, carrying great numbers, with their king Hoſea, into captivity; and kept that unhappy prince in priſon during the remainder of his life.

Q. Who ſucceeded Salmaneſer?

A. Sennacherib, his ſon; who, after having ravaged Egypt, in his return laid ſiege to Jeruſalem.

Q. Who reigned then at Jeruſalem?

A. Hezekiah, who had refuſed to pay the tribute which his father Ahaz promiſed to the Aſſyrian kings. Hezekiah had not forces ſufficient to oppoſe Sennacherib's great army; but it pleaſed God to deliver that pious king, by deſtroying 185,000 of his army in one night; and Sennacherib was reduced to return diſgracefully into his own kingdom.

Q. What became of Sennacherib after this?

A. Being rendered much more cruel by this diſappointment, he grew ſo much the object of general hatred, that his two eldeſt ſons ſlew him.

Q. What were the conſequences of that horrid action?

A. Whatever hatred the people bore to the deceaſed king, their deteſtation was ſtill greater

greater to thoſe who had committed ſo atrocious a crime, and, to avoid the puniſhment due to their paricide, they were reduced to fly into Armenia, and thereby left their younger brother, Eſarhaddon, to ſucceed his father.

Q. When happened this event?

A. Seven hundred and nine years before Chriſt.

Believe me, my deareſt mamma, your moſt dutiful and affectionate daughter,

MARIA MILTON.

LETTER V.

My dear Mamma,

THE good inſtructions which your letters always contain, whereby you ſo powerfully aſſiſt the endeavours of our governeſſes, to make me worthy of ſo excellent a parent, are additional obligations to the very many I am already under. If I could ſuſpect the truth of what you ſay on the ſuperior neceſſity of cultivating the minds of thoſe whoſe fortunes place them in a more conſpicuous light than the general run of mankind, we have in this neighbourhood a proof of it ſo convincing, as muſt remove all doubt.

Mr.

Mr. and Mrs. Armſton, who live within four miles of this houſe, ſucceeded to a great fortune, on the death of a diſtant relation, who dying without a will, his eſtate devolved on them as heirs at law, though almoſt unknown to him; and left by him to ſpend their youth in the low ſtation of country labourers. As the accompliſhments becoming a great fortune could not accompany the ſucceſſion, their riches only ſerve to render their vulgarity and aukwardneſs more conſpicuous. They are honeſt and good natured; virtues which, in their former ſtation, ſecured them the good-will of their equals; but when they became poſſeſſed of an eſtate of two thouſand pounds a year, and above threeſcore thouſand pounds in money, more was expected from them; and their deficiency in other particulars threw a ſort of ſhade over their virtues. They are not covetous, but their minds are too narrow to contain any idea of generoſity; they ſometimes relieve indigence, but it is in a manner ſo indelicate, that, if they remove the ſufferings of the body, it is only to ſubſtitute a heavier burden on the mind; and thoſe who receive their benefits ſcarcely feel their hearts lightened thereby; and, like the apothecary in Hamlet, might truly ſay, "My poverty, but not my will, "conſents." By this means they are ſuch

bad

bad œconomiſts in their favours, that they give without obliging; and ſet ſo high a value on their benevolent actions, that every one, who is the object of them, becomes, in their opinion, ungrateful; becauſe no acknowledgments, nor the moſt grateful conduct, can equal what they think due to them. They give great entertainments; but every thing is ſo ill ordered, that, inſtead of feaſting, they ſurfeit their gueſts. Their houſe is moſt expenſively furniſhed, but ſo void of taſte, propriety, or ſymmetry, that it looks like the warehouſe of ſome great upholſterer, who meant to exhibit his whole ſtock to ſale. When I dined there, I began to fear I had incurred Midas's puniſhment; whoſe covetouſneſs, you know, according to the fable, leading him to wiſh that all he touched might be turned to gold, was curſed by a literal indulgence, and ſtarved by the effect his lips had on every thing that approached them. Nothing appeared on the ſideboard, or table, but what was ſilver. They declare a contempt for paltry glaſs, and go ſo near baniſhing it, that they even gave me water to drink out of a ſilver mug. The table was loaded with ſilver diſhes, with ſilver covers, and an epargne in the middle; which, in contradiction to its name, held a plentiful ſtock for a ſeller of pickles, and

half

half a cheſt of lemons and oranges; however, when the covers were taken off, I found my fears vain; for I beheld as great a profuſion of meat, as of ſilver: there was not a bird of moderate ſize, but was garniſhed by ſmaller; the pudding with dumplings, and pyes with puffs. Mrs. Armſton, whoſe bulk ſeems a ſufficient burden, (for, as lazineſs was the only part of gentility which they could with eaſe aſſume, and good eating was the pleaſure of which they were moſt ſuſceptible, both ſhe and her huſband, in a ſhort time, grew very corpulent) is always, like the ladies in the Fairy Tales, covered with cloth of gold, or cloth of ſilver, and ſcarcely able to move under the weight of her cloaths. She never lets ſlip an occaſion of wearing her jewels, which are not ſet in the modern taſte; for, ſhe ſays, ſhe cannot bear to ſee people ſo ſtingy of their ſilver, therefore obliges the jeweller to put as much round her diamonds as he can poſſibly contrive. A poſt-chaiſe they deſpiſe, looking on it as an equipage which levels people of great fortune with their inferiors; therefore never move but in a very heavy berlin, painted with flying Cupids and ſprawling ſea-nymphs, and moſt tawdrily gilded, drawn by ſix horſes, of the very largeſt ſize they can procure, and at-

attend by a great number of footmen, in ſilver-laced liveries. As they imagine money to be the only thing which conſtitutes diſtinction or merit, they deſpiſe every one whoſe fortune falls much ſhort of their own, and look upon a generous or benevolent action, in a perſon of ſmall eſtate, as a piece of inſolence; nay, ſo forgetful are they of their former condition, that they almoſt wonder how a gentleman of a thouſand pounds a year can furniſh himſelf and his family with neceſſaries; and, when I was there, cenſured a neighbour of twice that income, for being guilty of ſtrange pride and extravagance, in putting his ſon to the ſame ſchool with their's; declaring, that the expences ran ſo high, they themſelves could ſcarcely afford it. When they came to this great ſucceſſion they had but one daughter alive, who was then about nine years old: mortified at the mourning which muſt, for ſome time, prevent that ſplendor of dreſs they were impatient to ſhine in, they determined, in the mean time, to indulge themſelves in decorating their daughter; ſaying, they thought it ridiculous to put children in mourning, diſfiguring them by ſuch diſmal cloaths. Accordingly, Miſs was ſtripped of her leathern bodice, her dowlaſs ſhift, linſey-woolſey gown, and blue checked apron; and, although it was

in

in the heat of ſummer, clad with a very rich gold ſtuff (for they have a lively ſenſe of the ſuperiority which gold has over ſilver) with linen fine in proportion; nor were they diſcouraged by finding that Miſs, not eaſily broke of former cuſtoms, within the firſt week left moſt of her fine lace on a hedge ſhe climbed over, and ſpoiled her cot by an excurſion into the coal-hole; but ſtill continued to dreſs her in gold ſtuffs, ſo ſtiff and unwieldy, as raiſed her ſhoulders, before almoſt up to her ears; and thickened that waiſt, which was ſo blown up by bad food, that ſhe was bigger about the middle, than many women in the laſt month of their pregnancy. She was bred up to think herſelf the greateſt lady in the kingdom, continually reminded how rich ſhe would be. If the people, whoſe office it was to teach her to read or write, endeavoured to make her attend to her buſineſs, they were reproved for their preſumption in contradicting her inclination, and deſired not to teaze the child; for, they thanked God, ſhe had not her bread to get. By ſuch means Miſs arrived at womanhood, almoſt as deſtitute of every uſeful knowledge, as when ſhe was firſt born. She was not to work, becauſe ſhe could afford to have as many ſervants as ſhe pleaſed to do it for her; and, by the indulgence of her

her lazineſs, both of mind and body, is become more corpulent than her parents.

Some years after Mr. Armſton came to his eſtate, a brother-in-law of his died, who had been an apothecary, in great buſineſs, in a conſiderable country town, and left one daughter, with about fifteen hundred pounds. Had he not been cut off in the flower of his age, ſhe might have expected much more; but, as he was a very generous, good man, he had not thought it juſtifiable to ſuſpend the exertion of his virtues, in order to accumulate riches haſtily. He had bred up his daughter with the humility which ſuited her rank, and the modeſty which ſo much adorns her ſex; but had been liberal in procuring her ſuch accompliſhments as become the fortune he hoped to leave her, and would render her more amiable, even if it ſhould not equal his wiſhes. She was in perſon extremely genteel and elegant, her face perfectly agreeable, but rather delicate than handſome. She danced well, played on the harpſichord, and accompanied it with a moſt harmonious voice: ſhe was miſtreſs of the French language, had a perfect knowledge of her own, drew very prettily, and withal worked well, and had an uncommon knowledge of œconomy for one of her years, which, at his death, was but ſixteen:

ſixteen: ſhe appeared much younger, being little of her age. The Armſtons, as I have ſaid, are good-natured, and, in the former part of their lives, had received great aſſiſtance from this brother-in-law; therefore, on his death, invited to their houſe his daughter; who, ſo blinded were they by their great fortune, they imagined in a moſt indigent condition. Miſs Armſton was then about twelve years of age, but much bigger than her couſin, and, in all appearance, older. Miſs Rawlins (ſo was this young orphan named) was adviſed to accept an invitation which appeared ſo convenient, and fixed her abode with them. The contraſt between the two girls was ſtriking; the extreme elegance of the one, the aukward robuſtneſs of the other; the delicacy of Miſs Rawlins's manner, the gentleneſs of her temper, and that modeſty which accompanies good ſenſe and real merit, made ſo ſtrong an oppoſition, when compared with the coarſe ill-breeding, the overbearing noiſineſs, and the inſolence of wealth, which characteriſed Miſs Armſton, that, from being diſagreeable, ſhe became almoſt offenſive to all her acquaintance: but her parents ſaw the contraſt in a different light; Miſs Rawlins's delicacy of behaviour appeared to them affectation, and her gentleneſs they eſteemed folly; but, while

while they admired the ſuperior perfections of their only daughter, they treated their niece with good nature, as far as their capacities could reach. They would, indeed, frequently tell her ſhe was little better than a beggar, and that it was happy for her to have ſuch great relations, who could afford to give her her board; and whenever any of her accompliſhments were taken notice of, obſerved, how happy it would have been, if her ſilly father had laid up the money thoſe things had coſt him towards her fortune. But theſe were inſults not deſigned to hurt; and they ſuffered her to amuſe herſelf with what ſhe had learnt, though they wondered at the ſilly girl for delighting in them; but were more ſurprized at the preference ſome of their acquaintance evidently ſhewed her. This preference indeed was general; but the ſuperior attention which the polite thought themſelves obliged to pay to the miſtreſs of the houſe and her daughter, made many endeavour to conceal it as much as poſſible; and the pain, which Miſs Rawlins plainly felt at any particular civilities ſhewn to herſelf, induced the good-natured to reſtrain the appearances of their partiality. She ſaw their pride hurt, when perſons, leſs guarded, too ſtrongly diſtinguiſhed her, (though Mrs. Armſton, at the ſame time,

heartily

heartily deſpiſed them, for being ſo ignorant of the true value of riches, as to think any thing elſe deſerved reſpect) and as pride was their only vice, Miſs Rawlins readily forgave it them; conſidered that a ſuperior ſhare of good ſenſe was requiſite to prevent their heads from being turned by ſo great a change of fortune, and thought herſelf ſo much obliged to their good-nature, that ſhe ſhould be highly blameable, either in ſuffering herſelf to cenſure them, even in thought, or in permitting others to mortify them, if ſhe could poſſibly prevent it. They made it a rule to ſpend two or three months in the year in London; not from any love for the place, but becauſe they thought it genteel: in truth, their time could not paſs there very agreeably. They knew not how to fall into the faſhionable expences, which will bring company to the houſes of people of the moſt deſpicable characters; and therefore found their acquaintance confined to ſuch of their country neighbours as the ſeaſon of the year had carried to town, and ſome few others, who took an unjuſtifiable pleaſure in expoſing them to the ridicule of perſons equally inhuman and ill-natured as themſelves; who, deſtitute of real good ſenſe or candour, knew not how to make allowances for the diſadvantages of education,

and the unavoidable poor condition in which the moſt improveable ſeaſon of Mr. and Mrs. Armſton's life had been ſpent. Miſs Rawlins's amiable perſon and manner recommended her to many, who would have been glad to have cultivated an acquaintance with her; but ſhe declined all ſuch advances, to avoid giving umbrage to her uncle and aunt.

Before Miſs Armſton became marriageable, her mother had produced two ſons, by whoſe birth their ſiſter's fortune could not fail of being much diminiſhed; however, her father declared he would give her twenty thouſand pounds; a ſum which might have purchaſed her a huſband with eaſe, had not her parents inſiſted on an equal fortune in the gentleman, and high ſettlements; nor could the rank of any pretender induce them to abate in their demands; for, as I have already obſerved, fortune was the only thing deemed by them worthy of conſideration; a prejudice which probably ſaved Miſs Armſton from becoming a prey to ſome needy man of faſhion, who would have been aſhamed of the woman whoſe folly had enabled him to remove the incumbrance of a heavy mortgage off a ſmall eſtate. As Miſs's parents believed her as amiable as rich, they wondered no equal match ſhould offer; but much

much greater was their ſurprize, when they received a propoſal for Miſs Rawlins, even above what they required for their daughter: they conſented, however, with pleaſure, and admired at the folly of the man, who, with an eſtate which might have entitled him to a woman of great fortune, neglected the advantage for a flimſy girl, (for that was the appellation they gave to her elegance of form) who could bring him only fifteen hundred pounds. The marriage was ſoon concluded: Miſs Rawlins acccompanied her huſband to his country-ſeat in an adjacent county, where they have ever ſince enjoyed a ſtate of as great mutual happineſs as this world can afford; and Miſs Armſton remains with her parents, a living and mortified example of the inſufficiency of riches towards obtaining reſpect and eſteem, when accompanied with aukwardneſs, vulgarity, ignorance, and pride.

I find I have ſcarcely left room for my leſſons.

HISTORICAL CATECHISM.

LESSON V.

Queſt. What is recorded of Eſarhaddon?

Anſ. The king of Babylon being dead, without leaving any children, the ſtate fell into great confuſion; of which Eſarhaddon taking advantage, he conquered it, and annexed it to his empire.

Q. Does hiſtory record the ſucceſſion and actions of the Babylonian kings?

A. We learn from it, that on Beleſis's death, the throne was poſſeſſed by three princes ſucceſſively; after whom reigned Merodach Baladan, or Merodach Empades, the ſon of Beleſis; but little account is given of his ſucceſſors.

Q. Pray proceed in your hiſtory of Eſarhaddon?

A. He ſubdued Iſrael and Judea, taking king Manaſſeh priſoner; but Manaſſeh having afterwards repented, and appeaſed God's wrath, Eſarhaddon gave him his liberty, and re-eſtabliſhed him in his kingdom of Judea; and the king of Aſſyria having before depopulated the provinces which belonged to the kings of Iſrael, he repeopled them with colonies out of his own kingdom.

Q. How did the differences between the Samaritan and the Jewiſh church ariſe from this?

A. The country of Samaria being grievouſly infeſted with lions, after the repeopling it by Eſarhaddon, he was told that this

this calamity was occaſioned by their not worſhipping the God of the country; whereupon he ſent them an Iſraelitiſh prieſt from among his captives, to inſtruct them in the Jewiſh religion; but, inſtead of being entirely converted by him, they only aſſociated the true God with their idols, and ever after continued this corrupt worſhip.

Q. Who ſucceeded Eſarhaddon?

A. Saoſduchinus, his ſon. This prince took Ecbatana, after having defeated Phraortes, called likewiſe Arphaxad, king of the Medes; who, being taken after the battle, was put to death by the Aſſyrian monarch. Soon after this ſucceſs, Holofernes, one of Saoſduchinus's generals, beſieged Bethulia, and was ſlain by Judith, as related in Scripture.

Q. Is not Saoſduchinus called in Scripture Nabuchadonoſor?

A. Yes; that name became common to all the kings of Babylon; and Saoſduchinus was diſtinguiſhed only by being called Nabuchadonoſor the Firſt. It was in the beginning of this king's reign that Tobit foretold the deſtruction of Nineveh.

Q. Who poſſeſſed the throne after the death of Saoſduchinus?

A. Chyniladanus, by ſome called Saracus, his ſon; whoſe effeminacy having rendered

him contemptible to his ſubjects, Nabopollaſer, his general, took advantage of this defection, ſeized Babylon, and reigned over that part of the empire for twelve years.

Q. What actions are recorded of Nabopollaſſer after he aſcended the throne?

A. With the aſſiſtance of the Medes he attacked Aſſyria, ſlew Saracus, and deſtroyed Nineveh, above forty years after Tobit had foretold it. From this time Babylon became the metropolis of the Aſſyrian empire.

Q. What is related of Nabopollaſſar after the conqueſt of Aſſyria?

A. Some years before his death, being attacked by Pharoah-Necho, king of Egypt, and defeated by him, he aſſociated in the empire his ſon Nabuchadonoſor, or Nebuchadnezzar (either name is uſed indifferently) who recovered Syria, Paleſtine, and Judea, with the Egyptian empire.

Q. When did Nabopolaſſar aſſociate his ſon?

A. In the year 604 before Chriſt.

HISTO-

HISTORICAL CATECHISM.

LESSON VI.

Queſt. How did Nebuchadnezzar treat the Jews?

Anſ. He took their king Jehoiachim priſoner; and, though he was ſoon prevailed upon to ſet him at liberty, on his promiſing a conſiderable tribute, yet he carried great part of the nobility and people, among whom was Daniel, to Babylon; and, from this time, we are to date the captivity of the Jews, which was often foretold by the prophet Jeremiah.

Q. Did Jehoiachim keep his agreement?

A. For ſome time; but, at length, he rebelled; and Nebuchadnezzar cauſed him to be beſieged in Jeruſalem: during the ſiege Jehoiachim was taken priſoner, and ſlain.

Q. Who ſucceeded Jehoiachim?

A. His ſon Jehoiachin, or Jeconiah, who finding it impoſſible to defend Jeruſalem any longer, delivered himſelf up, and was ſent, with all the principal men and artificers of Judah, captive to Babylon, in the ſeventh year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign.

Q. What became of the poorer ſort of Jews who were left in their country?

A. Nebuchadnezzar placed Zedekiah, the uncle of the captive king, on the throne, to rule over them.

Q. How did Zedekiah acquit himſelf of this truſt?

A. He, after a time, rebelled; but though he obtained the aſſiſtance of the king of Egypt, Nebuchadnezzar took Jeruſalem, made Zedekiah priſoner, and entirely deſtroyed the city.

Q. In what manner did he treat Zedekiah?

A. After that, by Nebuchadnezzar's command, all his children and relations had been killed before his face, he cauſed his eyes to be put out; and ſending him in chains to Babylon, he died there in priſon.

Q. What uſe did Nebuchadnezzar make of the ſpoils of the temple which he took at Jeruſalem?

A. He made therewith the golden image of Bell, the chief object of the worſhip of the Babylonians; by whom, ſome have ſuppoſed, Nimrod was meant. Nebuchadnezzar then took the city of Tyre, after a ſiege of 13 years, and deſtroyed it. He afterwards ſubdued Egypt.

Q. What happened to Nebuchadnezzar in the latter part of his reign?

A.

A. His great proſperity raiſed his pride and inſolence to ſuch a height, that he attributed his ſucceſs to his own wiſdom, unmindful that all things come from God; whereupon, it pleaſed the Almighty to deprive him of that underſtanding of which he made ſo bad a uſe; and to ſhew how eaſy it was for Omnipotence to reduce to a level with the beaſts of the field that prince, whom he had permitted to exalt himſelf above all other men; a puniſhment for which he was prepared by a dream, interpreted by Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar loſt his ſenſes, and, for ſeven years, wandered in the fields and woods, living on graſs, and ſuch food as he could meet with there: at the expiration of that term he recovered his reaſon, and was reſtored to his kingdom, but lived only a year after it.

GEOGRAPHICAL CATECHISM.

LESSON II.

Queſt. What is the meridian?

Anſ. The meridian is a great circle, which paſſing from north to ſouth, through the two poles, divides the globe into two equal parts, which we call the eaſtern and weſtern hemiſpheres: it is repreſented by the large

brazen circle through which the globe turns.

Q. Why is it called the meridian?

A. From the Latin word *Meridies*, or Mid-day; for when the ſun ſhines on the meridian, it is mid-day in thoſe places which are directly under it: thus, when the ſun is on that part of the meridian which is above the horizon, it is juſt in the ſouth, and then it is noon, or mid-day, to thoſe who are under that part of the meridian; when it ſhines on that part which is under the horizon, it is juſt in the north, and is mid-day to ſuch as in the lower hemiſphere live directly under it; but midnight to thoſe in the oppoſite part of the upper hemiſphere.

Q. This circle, and the horizon, are called the changeable circles. Whenever we move towards the eaſt or weſt, you will obſerve, that we change our meridian, and, conſequently, that the ſun is full ſouth, or, in other words, it is mid-day, proportionably ſooner or later in the place we have left, though in the ſmall diſtances of the different parts of one kingdom this may not be very perceivable: but we may move north and ſouth as far as we pleaſe, if we do not deviate at all to the eaſt or weſt, and ſtill keep under the ſame meridian; which will appear very plainly to you, if you caſt your

your eyes on the globe. Of what uſe are the figures on the meridian?

A. The meridian is divided, like the equator or ecliptic, into 360 degres, or four times ninety: by theſe we compute the latitude of any place; by reckoning in the northern hemiſphere its diſtance from the equator towards the north pole; but in the lower part of the meridian, which encircles the ſouthern hemiſphere, we compute the contrary way, reckoning from the pole towards the equator?

Q. The equator is the next circle you are to deſcribe?

A. The equator encircles the globe the contrary way from the meridian, which it croſſes in the middle, dividing the globe into northern and ſouthern, as the other does into eaſtern and weſtern hemiſpheres.

Q. Does the equator bear any other name?

A. It is called alſo the Equinoctial Line, a word derived from the Latin tongue; becauſe, when the ſun is in this line, the nights are of equal length with the days in every part of the globe. It is likewiſe often named, by way of diſtinction, the Line: and paſſing over it at ſea is, by ſailors, called croſſing the Line.

Q. Of what uſe are the figures on the equator?

A.

A. By the figures on the equator, or equinoctial line, we compute the longitude, or the diſtance of any place from the firſt meridian; and in this computation we generally reckon towards the eaſt.

Q. The ecliptic is the only great circle which remains unmentioned?

A. The ecliptic is a circle, which, ſurrounding the globe, cuts the equator obliquely, croſſing it twice in the year; this line repreſents the apparent annual path of the ſun through the heavens.

Q. It is, as you expreſs it, only the apparent path; becauſe the ſun ſtands ſtill, while the earth goes round it once every year; but this has the ſame effect, as to the ecliptic, as if the ſun encircled us; for, by the earth's poſition and motion, the ſun more eſpecially ſhines on that part of the globe which is marked by this circle.

I am, my dear mamma, your moſt dutiful and affectionate daughter,

MARIA MILTON.

LET-

LETTER VI.

My dear Mamma,

AS you expreſs ſome curioſity to know in what manner the ſcholars perform the taſk of writing in their own words the ſtories they read, I will ſend one or two examples belonging to that portion of hiſtory which made my leſſon of this day, as will appear by the catechiſm.

Candaules, king of Lydia, had married a very beautiful woman; of whom he was not only paſſionately fond, but ſo vain, that, not contented with continually extolling her charms, he determined to give Gyges, his chief favourite, ocular demonſtration, that he had, by all his praiſes, done but ſcanty juſtice to her beauty; a deſign which, perhaps, aroſe from perceiving ſome ſymptoms of incredulity in his favourite, who might attribute part of his panegyric to the infatuation of paſſion; and ſuppoſe the object of it not ſuperior to many of her ſex. His vanity prevailing over his delicacy, in order effectually to convince Gyges, he introduced him ſecretly into the queen's bed-chamber, and concealed him there while ſhe undreſſed; but not being ſo ſucceſsful in conveying him from thence, the queen perceived Gyges as he went out

of

of the room, and conceiving a reſentment too ſtrong to be gratified by mere complaints, ſhe ſtifled her reproaches, meditating a revenge more than adequate to the king's indiſcretion, or the inſult offered to her modeſty.

She ſent for Gyges the next morning, and being confirmed by his account in the ſuſpicion ſhe had immediately conceived, ſhe declared, ſhe would no longer ſuffer the man to live, who could voluntarily expoſe her to ſo great an indignity; and offered both herſelf and the throne to Gyges, if he would kill the king.

Influenced by ambition, or ſeduced by the queen's beauty, Gyges's integrity was too weak to reſiſt ſo powerful a temptation; he accepted the glaring offer, and having murdered Candaules, married the queen, and aſcended the Lydian throne. Some more fabulous authors tell us, that he effected the murder by means of a ring he poſſeſſed, which, when the ſtone was turned inwards, rendered him inviſible; and thus having entered Candaules's apartment unperceived, he got an opportunity of deſtroying him, without incurring ſuſpicion. Mrs. Wheatley, who generally makes ſome remarks by way of moral to the ſtory, obſerved, "that, although the queen's conduct was very deteſtable, yet it ſhewed

"the

" the regard then paid to decency and mo-
" deſty, ſince a violation of it could in-
" ſpire a woman with ſo ſtrong a reſent-
" ment, as to make her break through
" every tie of duty and humanity. Ne-
" ver," ſaid ſhe, " was vanity more ſe-
" verely puniſhed; though every age can
" furniſh examples of huſbands who have
" ſuffered by being vain of poſſeſſing a
" handſome wife, which frequently leads
" them to expoſe their wives to very dan-
" gerous addreſſes, while they pleaſe them-
" ſelves with a conſciouſneſs of having an
" undeniable property in a woman who is
" the object of general admiration, with-
" out conſidering the bad effects which
" coquetry may have on a mind once in-
" nocent."

Surely hiſtory cannot afford a ſtronger example of folly than this ſtory of Candaules; but I queſtion whether many women, in the like caſe, would not have forgiven the indelicacy, in conſideration of the high opinion ſhewn of their beauty; for flattery will too often obtain an excuſe for any offence. But ſuch extraordinary infatuation is ſo uncommon a fault in a huſband, that it is not worth reaſoning upon; the ſtrangeneſs of the fact makes reflections uſeleſs; therefore I will wave the ſubject, and proceed to my Catechiſm.

HISTO-

HISTORICAL CATECHISM.

LESSON VII.

Queſt. Who ſucceeded Nebuchadnezzar?

Anſ. Evilmerodach: he proved a very vicious and fooliſh prince, but one action of his is recorded to his honour; he gave Jehoiakin his liberty, after 27 years impriſonment, beſtowing on him a conſiderable revenue, and treating him with great favour and confidence. Evilmerodach, after a reign of two years, was ſlain by his relations, one of whom ſucceeded him.

Q. Who was he?

A. Nerigliſſar, Evilmerodach's ſiſter's huſband, who, in the fourth year of his reign, was ſlain in battle by Cyrus.

Q. Who ſucceeded Nerigliſſar?

A. Laboroſoarchod, his ſon: but, in a few months, his great cruelty cauſed him to be aſſaſſinated; and Narbonadius, called in ſcripture Belſhazzar, aſcended the throne, who is ſuppoſed to have been ſon to Evilmerodach.

Q. What happened to him?

A. All the wiſdom and care of Nitocris his mother could not long reſtrain him from the indulgence of his vicious diſpoſition, nor defend his kingdom from a formidable enemy;

enemy; for, in the 7th year of his reign, while neglectful of the impending danger, he was engaged in a great feaſt with his chief courtiers and officers, Cyrus took Babylon by ſtorm, and Belſhazzar was ſlain.

Q. Had Belſhazzar any ſucceſſor on the throne of Babylon?

A. No: Cyrus united the empire of Babylon to that of Perſia.

Q. When was this?

A. Five hundred and thirty-eight years before the birth of our Saviour.

HISTORICAL CATECHISM.

LESSON VIII.

The HISTORY of LYDIA.

Queſt. Was Babylon the only kingdom which Cyrus annexed to Perſia?

Anſ. No; Lydia and Media became alſo parts of that great empire.

Q. From whom did the country of Lydia take its name?

A. From Lydus, the ſon of Atys; that country being before called Meonia.

Q. What denomination was given to the firſt race of kings that reigned over Lydia?

A.

A. Atyades; ſo called from being the deſcendants of Atys; who we may imagine therefore was their firſt king.

Q. By whom were the Atyades ſucceeded?

A. By the Heraclidæ, or deſcendants from Hercules, of whom Argo, the fourth in deſcent from Hercules, was the firſt who poſſeſſed the Lydian throne.

Q. What account have we of his ſucceſſors?

A. Though we are told they ruled that kingdom for five hundred years, yet hiſtory is very ſilent about them till the reign of the laſt of the race, Candaules.

Q. What rendered him particularly diſtinguiſhed?

A. By the contrivance of his queen, he was murdered by Gyges, who ſucceeded him on the Lydian throne.

Q. What king reigned at that time over Aſſyria?

A. Gyges was cotemporary with Sennacherib, and with Eſarhaddon for the 28 firſt years of his reign; Gyges having enjoyed the crown of Lydia 38 years.

Q. By whom was he ſucceeded?

A. By his ſon Ardys; at whoſe death Sadyattes aſcended the throne: but nothing of great moment is recorded of either of theſe princes; the latter of whom was ſucceeded by his ſon Halyattes, about ſeven years

years after Nabopolaſſar deprived Chyniladanus of Babylon, and of that part of the Aſſyrian empire, of which that city was the metropolis.

Q. Did Halyattes diſtinguiſh his reign by any thing of more conſequence than is recorded during the adminiſtration of his predeceſſors?

A. He continued the ſiege of Miletos ſix years, which his father had proſecuted for the ſame ſpace of time.

Q. By what device was the ſiege ended?

A. Halyattes ſet an ambaſſador into the city to propoſe a truce. Thraſybulus, the tyrant of that country, ordered all the corn, and other proviſions then in it, to be placed in public view in the market, and directed the citizens to aſſume an air of the greateſt joy and feſtivity. The ambaſſador, deceived by this ſtratagem, gave ſuch an account of the plenty and chearfulneſs which reigned in the city, that Halyattes loſing all hopes of reducing it to ſurrender, raiſed the ſiege.

Q. What were the other principal actions of Halyattes's reign?

A. He made war againſt Cyaxares king of Media; but after ſeveral battles which proved undeciſive, the two armies were going to engage in another, when an eclipſe of the ſun alarmed each party ſo much, that

that they laid down their arms, and immediately concluded a peace: he alſo drove out of Aſia the Cimmerians, who, expelled from their own country by the Scythians, had ſettled there in the reign of Ardys.

Adieu, my dear Mamma: believe me ever your moſt dutiful, and gratefully affectionate daughter,

MARIA MILTON.

LETTER VII.

My dear Mamma,

I SHALL again ſend you ſome of the Hiſtorical Exerciſes, thoſe particularly which relate to the part contained in my yeſterday's and to-day's leſſons in the Catechiſm. When Crœſus was at the ſummit of all his wealth and glory, poſſeſſed of riches which have made his name proverbial, and crowned with an uninterrupted ſeries of ſucceſs, Solon, one of the ſeven cotemporary ſages of Greece, and the famous legiſlator of Athens, was attracted to Sardis, the metropolis of Lydia, by his deſire to ſee ſo great a monarch as Crœſus. Crœſus, vain of his wealth and ſplendour, exhibited his treaſures, and diſplayed all his magnificence to the frugal and humble philoſopher; who, view-

viewing his pomp and riches with philoſophic eyes, ſeemed little to regard them: but this wiſe indifference to gaudy externals did not diſcourage the king from aſking him, "What man of all he had ever ſeen "he judged moſt happy?" "Tellus," replied Solon, "citizen of Athens, a man of "virtue and integrity, who in his private "fortunes was placed above indigence, and "after ſeeing his country enjoy uninter-"rupted proſperity during his whole life, "his children deſerving and poſſeſſed of "univerſal eſteem, at length died glori-"ouſly in fighting for his country." Crœſus, not much pleaſed with Solon's giving the preference of ſituation to a private citizen, juſt raiſed above indigence, aſked him, "Who he eſtemed the next in felicity to "Tellus?" "Cleobis and Biton of Argos," anſwered the philoſopher; "who, on a "ſolemn feſtival, the oxen not being ready "which ſhould have drawn their mother, a "prieſteſs of Juno, to the temple, themſelves "drew her chariot thither. All the people, "charmed with ſo great a mark of filial "reſpect and humility, congratulated her "on her ſons virtues; while ſhe, in the "tranſport of her joy, petitioned the god-"deſs to reward them with the greateſt "bleſſing the gods could beſtow on man; "and her prayer being granted, as ſoon

"as

" as the ſacrifice was over, her ſons fell " into a ſleep, from which they never " waked."

Crœſus ſtill more diſpleaſed, determining in plain terms to enquire the philoſopher's opinion, ſaid, " Then you do not include " me in the number of the happy?" Solon replied, " Know, O king of Lydia, that, " to the ſimplicity and moderation of a " Grecian ſpirit, riches and ſplendour ap- " pear inſignificant; happineſs cannot exiſt " in externals, which at beſt are but tran- " ſient advantages; the viciſſitude of for- " tune is ſuch, that we do not pretend to " judge the ſtate of any man till his death; " ſince, while he remains in this changeable " world, the heavieſt calamities may ſtill " befal him; and adverſe fortune is moſt " afflicting to thoſe who have long enjoyed " proſperity: we therefore cannot ſay that " happineſs is the portion of any man, till " we ſee that it has pleaſed the Gods to " continue it to the end of his life."

Mrs. Wheatley obſerved, " If a wiſe pa- " gan could ſee that nothing is a real hap- " pineſs but what is laſting, and the enjoy- " ment of which is continued through " life; with how much greater reaſon may " a Chriſtian, who knows his exiſtence to " be eternal, determine, that nothing de- " ſerves the name of happineſs, which will

" not

" not yield him pleaſure through all eternity?
" Our virtues only will do this, while the
" things, for which people ſo often ſa-
" crifice their integrity, yield them very
" imperfect pleaſure in poſſeſſion, are with
" difficulty retained, and are the cauſe of
" eternal miſery: thoſe who are are truly
" pious and virtuous are indeed happy, for
" their enjoyments will bleſs their whole ex-
" iſtence.".

As this day's leſſon included other ſtories, which would ſerve for the ſame ſort of exerciſes, they were aſſigned to different ſcholars, and I will inſert them likewiſe.

The firſt misfortune which interrupted the uncommon proſperity of Crœſus touched him in the tendereſt point. He had two ſons, the one dumb, the other named Atys, of the moſt amiable diſpoſition, and greatly beloved by his father, who having dreamed that an oracle foretold his ſon ſhould periſh by iron, cauſed to be removed out of his ſight all inſtruments made of that metal, and would not permit him to ſerve in his armies; but one fatal day, Atys ſo earneſtly importuned his father to ſuffer him to be preſent; though only as a ſpectator, at the hunting a boar, wherein all the court was engaged, that the king committing him to the care of Adraſtus, a worthy prince, (who had taken refuge at the Lydian court) per-

permitted him to partake of the general diverſion. All the father's caution could not avail; the fatal ſtroke was given by him who was conſtituted Atys's defender; he was killed by a javelin which Adraſtus unartfully threw at the boar; and this unhappy prince, unable to ſupport his own regret, and the ſight of the afflicted parent's anguiſh, ſlew himſelf on the funeral pile of the unfortunate Atys.

Mrs. Wheatley on this ſtory obſerved, that Crœſus in this caſe was a remarkable example of the conſequences of a too anxious ſolicitude: "Had his real piety," ſaid ſhe, "been equal to his credulity, he would "have known, that although proper cau- "tion and moderate care for the preſerva- "tion of ourſelves or others, is not only "allowed, but required of us; yet, car- "ried to exceſs, it either ſhews a diſtruſt "of God's mercy, or too great a depend- "ance on our own wiſdom, as if by its dic- "tates we could fruſtrate the decrees of "the Almighty. Reaſon and religion both "ſhould have taught him, that his part "was to keep his ſon out of unneceſ- "ſary dangers, and for the reſt to ſub- "mit himſelf entirely to God; to truſt in "his paternal care, in full perſuaſion that "all his decrees are founded in mercy; "and that if his infinite wiſdom ſaw it

"beſt

" beſt that Atys ſhould live, he would pre-
" ſerve him; and therefore, if he permitted
" his death, it was a proof that it was beſt
" he ſhould die; and that even the tender-
" eſt father ought to acquieſce with pa-
" tience, tho' with grief."

The third ſtory I ſhall ſend you of Crœſus is a ſort of ſequel to the firſt.

The city of Sardis having been taken by ſtorm, and Crœſus made priſoner, Cyrus ordered him to be burnt. A funeral pile was erected for that purpoſe, and the unfortunate king placed thereon; who ſeeing the people that were to ſet it on fire approach, and reflecting within himſelf on the deplorable change in his affairs, comparing his paſt proſperity, his immenſe riches, his great power and magnificence, the flouriſhing ſtate of his country, and his own fame and glory, with his preſent condition, deprived of his kingdom, his wealth, and his liberty, his country laid waſte, his glory blaſted by ſo total a defeat, and the ignominious death which now approached him; he thought on Solon's words, which, though unpleaſing when he heard them, now wore the air of a prediction; and taught by experience a truth of which philoſophy could not convince him, he ſaw in how ſhort a time the moſt potent monarch might become the moſt wretched of mankind; and

his thoughts being filled with the philoſopher who had ſo wiſely warned him of the viciſſitude of fortune, he cried out in the moſt pathetic tone of voice, " O Solon, " Solon, Solon!" Cyrus, who was preſent, ſurprized at his pronouncing with ſo much vehemence the name of a man who ſeemed then of little concern to him, when in a ſituation that might ſo juſtly engage all his thoughts, enquired the reaſon of it; and the converſation Crœſus had held with that philoſopher, and to which he then alluded, was related to him.

Cyrus, ſtruck with the wiſdom of Solon's diſcourſe, and the remarkable verification of what he ſaid in the unhappy fate of Crœſus, was deeply affected with this proof of the amazing viciſſitude of human affairs; and by conſidering that every one was liable by the ſame means to be thrown at once from the ſummit of glory and proſperity, into the deepeſt miſery, his compaſſion for Crœſus was awakened: he ordered him to be taken down from the funeral pile, and ever after treated him as one of his moſt intimate friends; a generoſity of which Crœſus's conduct from that time ſhewed him highly worthy.

Mrs. Wheatley obſerved, that "it did " little honour to Cyrus to be more " moved by a general reflection, which " might

" might bring the thoughts of the viciſſi-
" tude of fortune home to his own breaſt,
" and in ſome degree make him fear for
" himſelf, than by the melancholy ſpecta-
" cle of ſo great a prince reduced into ſo
" deplorable a ſituation by his own orders;
" and therefore ſome hiſtorians deny the
" truth of the whole ſtory, though related
" by him who appears the moſt deſirous of
" raiſing Cyrus's character.

" As it now ſtands," ſaid ſhe, " it re-
" preſents compaſſion as a very ſelfiſh prin-
" ciple, and teaches us how difficult it is
" for perſons in the height of proſperity to
" liſten to truth, or to be perſuaded that
" they ſhould not put their confidence in
" worldly poſſeſſions, but truſt in him in
" whoſe hands is the diſpoſal of all things,
" who giveth, and who taketh away; and
" who, by making the diſpoſitions and in-
" clinations of our hearts ſuit our ſitua-
" tions in life, can render either greatneſs
" or poverty a bleſſing, preſerving us from
" the ſnares of the one, and defending us
" from the miſery, which, if left to our
" own weakneſs, would attend the other."

Another of the young ladies was deſired to give an account of the methods by which Deioces obtained the crown of Media, and performed it in the following manner.

The anarchy into which the ſtate of Media had fallen, after ſhaking off the Aſſyrian yoke, grew very afflicting to the whole people. Rapine and violence became general; the ſtrong tyrannized over the weak, and were themſelves continually engaged in the moſt fatal quarrels with each other. Deioces alone conceived a deſign of ſubſtituting juſtice to force; and endeavoured to reconcile his contentious neighbours, by making himſelf arbitrator; an office he exerciſed with ſo much prudence, that the fame of his wiſdom ſoon extended through the whole country. As the good effects of his influence became viſible in the peace and happineſs enjoyed in his neighbourhood, the whole nation grew deſirous of ſharing the bleſſing, and the people repaired to him from all parts, to beſeech him to decide their diſputes, and compoſe their differences; wherein he ſucceeded ſo well, that the face of the country was entirely changed, the people lived in peace, and began to feel the bleſſings of plenty, by the power they now had to cultivate the earth.

When Deioces thought they were grown ſufficiently ſenſible of the benefits ariſing from his advice and direction, he refuſed to continue their arbitrator, declaring that the attention he had given to the affairs of others, had obliged him ſo totally

to

to neglect his own, that they were fallen into the utmoſt diſorder; and he found it impoſſible, without entire ruin, to ſacrifice his time to the good of others. This change in his conduct cauſed a general conſternation; the conſequences were foreſeen, and ſoon followed; all things again fell into confuſion, and the people were the leſs able to ſupport the evils that enſued, as they had for a time enjoyed the bleſſings of peace and liberty happily united.

In this ſtate of diſtreſs, ſome of the oldeſt and moſt prudent of the Medes aſſembled, to conſider of the beſt means of redreſſing the grievances which afflicted them; and the moſt probable relief that occurred to them, was to chuſe Deioces for their king, as they ſhould by that ſtep ſecure to themſelves a renewal of the benefits they had before reaped from his wiſdom, and leave him no cauſe to complain of an enforced neglect of his own affairs. This reſolution met with a general concurrence from the people, and a ready compliance from Deioces, who herein found all his views anſwered, the throne being the great aim of his ambition, and the end to which his whole conduct tended.

Mrs. Wheatley obſerved, that if ambition could ever be juſtified, it was in this caſe, where the people were rendered miſerable

by anarchy; and there appeared no one but himſelf, qualified both by inclination and capacity to deliver them from it: "But," added ſhe, "I do not think we can fairly "conclude, that from the firſt he aimed "at the crown; the event was even be-"yond hope. However high an opinion he "might entertain of his own wiſdom, he "could ſcarcely expect that a whole people, "wild, fierce, and lawleſs, ſhould ſubmit "to his deciſions, and acknowledge his ſu-"periority. I am rather inclined to believe, "that at firſt he meant only to benefit "himſelf, and thoſe who lived near him, "(for in this particular their intereſts and "his were united) as peaceable neighbours "ſecured his own tranquility. But ſo apt "is vice to creep into actions, at firſt "founded on virtue, and ſo eaſily are we "corrupted by extraordinary ſucceſs, when "he found how extenſive and great his "influence was, his ambition was awakened "by the promiſing appearance of a ſucceſs, "till then beyond his hopes; and he pur-"ſued accordingly the moſt probable means "of obtaining the throne; and however "he may be accuſed of tyranny, he cer-"tainly uſed his power much to the ad-"vantage of his ſubjects, whom, from a "wild, and lawleſs people, with few fixed "habitations, he brought into ſociety, and

"taught

" taught the neceſſary ſocial arts. We are " told that he aſſumed great pomp and " ſtate, and would not familiarize himſelf " to the people's eyes, confining himſelf " much to his palace: and it is eaſy to " imagine that ſome ſuch means might be " neceſſary to imprint reſpect and reve- " rence on their minds, without which they " would not readily have obeyed him when " his commands claſhed with their ſavage " inclinations, or private intereſts; and we " find, that although he himſelf was little " ſeen, yet he had a very exact knowledge " of all that paſſed in his kingdom, and " regulated the whole with the moſt judi- " cious policy."

HISTORICAL CATECHISM.

LESSON IX.

Queſt. Who ſucceeded Halyattes?

Anſ. Crœſus: he began his reign in the year 562 before Chriſt, a year after Evil-merodach aſcended the Aſſyrian throne. Crœſus was ſcarcely more diſtinguiſhed for his riches, than for the great favour he ſhewed to the wiſe and learned men of his age; careſſing particularly the ſeven Grecian ſages, ſo much celebrated; nor

were his courage and the ſucceſs of his arms inferior to his liberality, having extended his dominions by the addition of a great number of contiguous provinces.

Q. Did he continue the favourite of fortune during his whole life?

A. No: the growing power of Cyrus alarming him, at the ſame time that it inſpired him with an ambitious deſire of making more conſiderable conqueſts, he ſought the alliance of the Aſſyrians and Greeks; and jointly with them entered into a war with the Medes: here his good fortune ended, Cyrus defeated the confederate army, Nerigliſſor the king of Aſſyria was ſlain, and Crœſus put to flight. He ſoon raiſed new forces, and was again defeated near Thymbra in Lydia, a city not far from Sardis, whither Crœſus retired, after he found the battle entirely loſt; and the reſt of the allies returned to their reſpective countries.

Q. What were the conſequences of this defeat?

A. When Cyrus approached Sardis, Crœſus made a ſally, but was again overcome, and driven back into the city, which Cyrus entered the next day, by means of the treachery of a Perſian, ſervant to the governor of Sardis. The conqueror ſpared the lives of the people; but obliged them to deliver up all their riches, and treated Crœſus with great

great generoſity, ſtill leaving him the title of king, and ſome portion of regal power. He accompanied Cyrus in moſt of his expeditions, and was conſulted as one of his principal counſellors; but with him ended the kingdom of Lydia.

Q. When did this event happen?

A. Five hundred and forty-eight years before the birth of our Saviour.

HISTORICAL CATECHISM.

LESSON X.

The hiſtory of Media.

Queſt. How came the kingdom of Media to be detached from that of Aſſyria, of which it made a part under Arbaces, at the time the firſt Aſſyrian monarchy was divided, and the empire of Babylon ſeparated from it?

Anſ. When Sennacherib's power was reduced by the miraculous deſtruction of his army in Judea, ſeveral provinces revolted from him, the principal of which was Media. Diſguſted with the arbitrary government of the Aſſyrian monarchs, they attempted a kind of democracy; but it ſoon degenerating into confuſion, they returned

to the monarchical government, and choſe Deioces for their king.

Q. Did the dangerous temptations of power, ſo often deſtructive of the virtues of a private man, make Deioces leſs worthy of the throne than he appeared to be before he was exalted to it?

A. Some repreſent him as a tyrannical prince, but allow that he civilized his people: he prevailed with them, by enlarging and beautifying Ecbatana, one of their towns, to render it a great city, and it became the metropolis of the kingdom; he eſtabliſhed a very exact policy throughout the ſtate, and regulated the diſtribution of juſtice in the wiſeſt and moſt equitable manner.

After poſſeſſing the throne many years he died, leaving his ſubjects the fruits of his peaceful reign, and wiſe government; the ſtate then enjoying the greateſt proſperity.

Q. Who reigned in Babylon when Deioces died?

A. Saoſduchinus; and Manaſſeh was at that time king of Judea.

Q. Who ſucceeded Deioces in the kingdom of Media?

A. Phraortes his ſon; who, not contented with the flouriſhing kingdom left him by his father, extended his dominion, by ſubjecting Perſia

Perſia to his government. Encouraged by ſucceſs, he invaded and ſubdued the greateſt part of Upper Aſia. At length he ventured to attack the Aſſyrians, and having laid waſte the country, beſieged Nineveh, but received a total overthrow from Saoſduchinus.

Q. What followed this victory?

A. Saoſduchinus took Ecbatana, and plundered it, Phraortes fled to the mountains of Ragan, but was at length delivered up to Saoſduchinus, who cauſed him to be ſhot to death with arrows. But the ſucceſs of the Aſſyrians we find did not prevent Cyaxares the Firſt from aſcending the throne of Media on his father's deceaſe.

Q. Who reigned in Judea when Phraortes was ſlain?

A. Joſiah, the ſon of Ammon, and grandſon of Manaſſeh.

GEOGRAPHICAL CATECHISM.

LESSON III.

Queſt. Pray deſcribe the Ecliptic?

Anſ. The Ecliptic is divided into twelve ſigns or parts, each diſtinguiſhed by a particular figure and name; in ſmall ſpaces, and for greater convenience, as taking leſs room,

room, theſe are expreſſed by peculiar marks, without either uſing the name or figure; but on the horizon of the globe we ſee both names, marks, and figures; they are ranked in the following order: Aries ♈, Taurus ♉, Gemini ♊, Cancer ♋, Leo ♌, Virgo ♍, Libra ♎, Scorpio ♏, Sagittarius ♐, Capricornus ♑, Aquarius ♒, Piſces ♓; the ſix firſt mentioned of theſe are on the Northern part of the Equator, and therefore called the Northern Signs; the ſix latter on the Southern, and called the Southern Signs.

Q. What are theſe Signs?

A. So many aſſemblages of certain ſtars, and therefore called Conſtellations, through which the Sun paſſes yearly; and each includes an equal portion of the Ecliptic.

Q. What do you mean by a Conſtellation?

A. By a Conſtellation we mean a certain ſet of ſtars, which, for convenience, aſtronomers have aſſociated under, and diſtinguiſhed by particular names and figures.

Q. Is the Ecliptic and the Zodiac the ſame?

A. No, not abſolutely; though the latter includes the Ecliptic, which is a line paſſing along the middle of the Zodiac, the Zodiac, being extended about ten degrees on each ſide of the Ecliptic, contains moſt of

of the ſtars which compoſe the twelve Signs or Conſtellations.

Q. The Zodiac is chiefly of ſervice in the deſcription of the celeſtial globe; therefore we will ſay no more of it at preſent, the Ecliptic being ſufficient for the uſe of the terreſtrial. Is the year equally divided between theſe twelve ſigns?

A. Very near it at leaſt. Thirty degrees are allotted to each. The Ecliptic, like every other Circle, is divided into 360 degrees: thus the Sun paſſes through one ſign nearly in a month. The Sun is ſaid to be in any one of theſe ſigns when it is between us and that conſtellation; or, when it appears in that part of the heavens where thoſe ſtars are, of which the ſign is compoſed.

Q. Do you remember to what reaſons ſome have attributed the choice of the figures of the ſigns?

A. Before the invention of writing enabled men to tranſmit with facility their thoughts to numbers, they naturally dealt much in emblems, and thereby expreſſed an important meaning under perhaps one ſlight mark. Thus Aries, or the Ram, it is ſuppoſed, ſerved to denote the firſt month of the Spring, becauſe in that ſeaſon, which is the time that animals chiefly multiply,

Lambs

Lambs are the firſt that are produced. Taurus, or a Bull, was choſen as an emblem and diſtinction of the ſecond month, Calves being the next in order, and then beginning to be brought into the fields.

Q. But what occaſioned their giving Gemini, or the Twins, as an emblem of the third month?

A. It appears that, originally, two Goats were the Twins: the Egyptians had this for their ſign; the Greeks changed it into Caſtor and Pollux. The Goats were produced after the Lambs and Calves, and properly denoted the third month; and there being two of them, it is imagined only to be an implication of their ſuperior fruitfulneſs to that of other animals.

The next Sign, Cancer, or the Crab, is otherwiſe accounted for; it is ſuppoſed to have been choſen to denote the motion of the Sun, which now beginning to deſcend, ſeemed to move, partly backwards, partly ſideways, a motion like that of the Crab.

Q. What is implied by the figure of Leo, or the Lion?

A. The Sun's extreme heat in the latter end of July and beginning of Auguſt, the time when the Sun is in Leo, has been thought not improperly expreſſed by the fury of the Lion.

Q. Pleaſe to proceed to Virgo?

A.

A. Virgo, or the Virgin, with the wheat-ſheaf in her hand, I think is ſuppoſed to ſignify the time of harveſt, and the gathering in of the corn; the wings on her feet implied that the ſeaſon was flying away till the next year.

Q. Can you account for Libra, or the Scales?

A. Libra, or the Scales, expreſſes the equality of day and night; the Sun arriving at the Autumnal Equinox during the continuance of this ſign. Scorpio, or the Scorpion, with its ſting and its venom, ſeems a natural alluſion to the diſeaſes which are generally epidemical in Autumn.

Q. Sagittarius next requires your explanation?

A. Sagittarius, or the Bowman with his arrows, is a fit emblem of the hunting-ſeaſon: Aquarius, or the Waterer, with his urn, from which water flows, as properly ſignifies Winter rains.

Q. You have now gone through all the ſigns except Capricorn and Piſces?

A. The Sun's beginning to aſcend from the loweſt point of its courſe, is ſuppoſed to be compared in the ſign Capricornus, or the Goat, to the method of the Goats, who always feed climbing up the hills. Piſces, or the Fiſhes, are to denote the fiſhing-ſeaſon, which

which uſually begins very early in the Spring.

" Thus," ſaid Mrs. Wheatley, very " ingenious authors have accounted for " the figures choſen for theſe conſtella- " tions; how far they have proceeded on " ſufficient authority, or how far they have " been guided by their imaginations, is a " point more eaſily diſputed than decided."

Some trouble is requiſite to imprint on the mind whatever is only an object of the underſtanding; on the contrary, how eaſily and imperceptibly are impreſſions made on the heart! and how ſtrongly is every idea that ariſes from thoſe impreſſions fixed on the memory! You ſee the pains taken to engrave on my remembrance the ſubſtance of what I read; but there is no occaſion for any art or invention to keep my dear Mamma conſtantly in my thoughts, nor to remind me how very ſincerely I am, her moſt dutiful and affectionate daughter,

MARIA MILTON.

LET-

LETTER VIII.

My dear Mamma,

AS you encourage me to continue a communication of all my thoughts as well as actions, I will give you ſome account of two ladies, who this afternoon made Mrs. Wheatley a viſit, as they at preſent engage my thoughts. The one (Mrs. Manners) lives in this neighbourhood; the other is with her on a viſit.

Mrs. Manners was daughter by a firſt wife to Mr. Millan, a gentleman who enjoyed for many years a conſiderable place under the government. After having lived three years a widower, he married (when his daughter was about twenty years old) Mrs. Arran, a widow lady, for his ſecond wife, who had likewiſe one only daughter, about two years younger than Miſs Millan, and is the perſon I have mentioned as a viſiter to Mrs. Manners. Six thouſand pounds were ſecured to each of the young ladies by the marriage ſettlements; but in other points there was a great inequality between them. Miſs Millan's perſon was extremely agreeable, her countenance ſenſible, lively, and good natured, but without any title to beauty; whereas Miſs Arran, now Mr. Mil-

Millan's daughter-in-law, was exceſſively handſome, and her whole perſon exquiſitely formed; a circumſtance which had ſo entirely engroſſed her's and her mother's attention, that her underſtanding, naturally good, was totally neglected. She was taught only ſuch things as might add grace to her beauty; ſhe danced well, and played tolerably on the harpſichord; but, in every other particular, was ſo conſummately ignorant, that ſhe was not even ſenſible of it; and as the admiration ſhe excited led her to believe herſelf always the principal perſon in company, ſhe took the lead in all converſation, and expoſed her ignorance on every occaſion; hurried on by the exceſs of ſpirits, with which the intoxication of vanity inſpired her, to talk on all ſubjects. Her whole time was ſpent in dreſſing or in company, the ſmalleſt degree of retirement appearing a dreadful evil to her, who had ever ready in her juſtification theſe lines of Milton: "Beauty is nature's boaſt, and "ſhould be ſhewn at courts, at feaſts, and "high ſolemnities, where moſt may wonder at the workmanſhip; it is for homely "features to keep home, they had their "name thence; coarſe complexions and "cheeks of ſorry dye may ſerve to ply "the ſampler, or to teaze the houſewife's "wool; what ſerves the vermeil tinctured "lip

" lip for that, love darting eyes, and treſſes " like the morn ?" And perhaps theſe lines were all ſhe had ever laid up in her mind, out of the little ſhe had read. She acquired in great perfection all the arts of coquetry, and every caprice whereby pretty women ſo often endeavour to diſtinguiſh themſelves, and which, by being a ſtrong indication of ſuch an extreme deſire of admiration, as ſecures to every man a favourable reception, attracts many danglers, though it leſſens their eſteem for the woman to whom they pay their idle addreſſes. Miſs Millan, on the contrary, had been educated till the age of ſeventeen with the greateſt care, by a very ſenſible and excellent mother, who made her daughter's improvements the chief object of her attention, forbearing all the diſſipation of a London life, living in a retired manner, keeping no company but what afforded her a rational entertainment, and whoſe converſation would conſpire with her other endeavours to improve her daughter's principles and underſtanding. Perſonal accompliſhments were not neglected, but the cultivation of her heart and mind were the principal objects; nothing that could purify the one, or adorn the other, was omitted; and after the death of this worthy woman, Mr. Millan, who had always concurred in her plan, endeavoured

voured to ſupply her place, by dedicating all the leiſure his employment would allow him to the completion of it; nor did his ſecond marriage lead him to neglect his daughter, or abate his fondneſs for her; and he obſerved with great pleaſure, that ſhe wiſhed to continue her former regular and quiet way of life, as much as the complaiſance ſhe, in every thing, ſhewed to her mother-in-law would admit. Mrs. Millan was a very good-humoured woman, and extremely fond of her huſband, therefore deſirous of obliging him in every thing; and ſhe was ſo much pleaſed with Miſs Millan's behaviour to her, having feared that ſhe ſhould find ſome of the effects ariſing from the uſual prejudices girls are apt to entertain againſt a mother-in-law, that ſhe would not on any account controul her inclinations, but ſuffered her to ſpend moſt of her time at her ſtudies in her own chamber, while Miſs Arran was fluttering in a continued ſeries of public diverſions, to which Mrs. Millan was frequently induced to accompany her, when no other proper conductor, or, according to the faſhionable phraſe, no other chaperon, offered to take the charge. Mr. Millan and his daughter were mortified to ſee a fine creature ſo perverted by vanity, but her mother's weakneſs in that point, and their unwillingneſs

to

to give uneaſineſs to Miſs Arran, whoſe ſweetneſs of temper, and engaging vivacity, made them love her in ſpite of her follies, led them to acquieſce. Sometimes he would hint his diſapprobation to his wife, but, as he loved his peace, he found the ſubject too tender, and Miſs Millan did not think ſhe had any title to cenſure a conduct permitted by her parents, except when Miſs Arran's coquetry led her to endeavour to attract the admiration of married men; ſhe would then try to make her ſee that her vanity was not innocent, ſince, if ſhe ſucceeded in her aim, ſhe might create a great deal of miſery, by engaging affections eſſential to the happineſs of ſome other women, and to which they had the beſt title: but her remonſtrances had no other effect, than to convince herſelf, that a true coquette does not think deep enough to attend to ſuch conſequences; that her whole aim is general admiration; and being free from what the world calls criminal intentions, ſhe imagines the hearts of all mankind are lawful prey, and neceſſary to ſupport the character of a beauty. Notwithſtanding the number of admirers, who whiſpered the moſt ſoothing flattery in Miſs Arran's willing ears, ſhe frequently found occaſions of ſurprize and diſappointment; ſhe obſerved, that if Miſs Millan entered

entered into converſation, the attention of the company was generally turned towards her, and that, at beſt, only the moſt ſilly and trifling of the men continued their addreſſes to herſelf; Miſs Millan had more ſerious propoſals than Miſs Arran, and thoſe from perſons more eligible, though none of them appeared ſufficiently ſo to tempt her to enter the marriage ſtate. But this viſible preference to one ſo inferior in beauty, had no effect on Miſs Arran till about three years after her mother's marriage, when a very accompliſhed young gentleman, ſon to an intimate friend of Mr. Millan's, and juſt arrived from abroad, awakened a nicer ſenſibility on the occaſion. He was immediately captivated by Miſs Arran's charms; and though his eſtate was ſo conſiderable that it might demand a far better fortune, yet his father, from affection to his ſon, and regard for Mr. Millan, declared himſelf determined not to controul his inclinations, though the young lady's diſpoſition made him think his ſon's choice imprudent.

Mr. Leſter (that was the young gentleman's name) was too compleatly amiable not to make an impreſſion on the heart even of a coquette; Miſs Arran's acknowledged his power, but yet it was not ſufficient to correct her behaviour; ſhe made him ſuffer

all

all that caprice and coquetry could inflict, and ſoon ſet his underſtanding at variance with his inclinations. He ſaw the impropriety of his choice, but reaſon will not immediately conquer paſſion. Miſs Millan endeavoured to perſuade her to behave to him in a manner more ſuitable to his merit; telling her, that as he was entirely unexceptionable, and, through all her aſſumed airs, ſhe plainly perceived exceedingly agreeable to her, ſhe ought to treat him like a man of ſenſe, who poſſeſſed, as well as deſerved her eſteem; warning her, that her capricious conduct would diſguſt him. But ſhe had too high an opinion of her charms, to believe that they could loſe their power, though ſhe frequently diſcovered that he was angry with himſelf for loving her; and as if it was more honourable to triumph over his reaſon, than to gain it on her ſide, ſhe exulted in ſeeing him an unwilling ſlave; and ſuch indeed he continued almoſt a year, his father finding pretences to delay their marriage, in hopes his ſon would become ſenſible he had made an injudicious choice. Herein he was not deceived; the young man's patience was at length exhauſted, and he perceived that he muſt be wretched with a wife of Miſs Arran's diſpoſition; however, undetermined in what manner to act, he continued

tinued his viſits, but his attention began to be turned towards Miſs Millan, in whoſe converſation he found a rational pleaſure, and whoſe conduct he highly eſteemed. His neglect of Miſs Arran piqued her pride, and ſhe treated him with inſolence and peeviſhneſs, which adding force to his reaſon, compleated its conqueſt over paſſion; and his ſincere regard for Miſs Millan, with his deſire of preventing her father's having any cauſe to complain of his inconſtancy, changed his views, and he ſolicited her to marry him; frankly acknowledging that he had not the ſame extravagant paſſion for her which he had conceived for Miſs Arran; but, on the contrary, entertained ſentiments more deſirable and more laſting.

Miſs Millan was much mortified at this proof of the entire change in Mr. Leſter's affections, though ſhe had foreſeen the probability. She had a very ſincere eſteem for him, and would have thought herſelf fortunate, had ſhe been the firſt object of his addreſſes; but as ſhe was well convinced Miſs Arran's heart was really deeply engaged, ſhe could not think of rendering her friend unhappy, by marrying a man whoſe affections ſhe valued, though ſhe had ſo juſtly loſt them; and beſides, was under ſome apprehenſions leſt the mortification it would give Mrs. Millan might affect her

conduct

conduct towards her husband, and disturb the peace and happiness of his life. From these motives she refused Mr. Lester, not without intimating a disapprobation of his inconstancy.

Mr. Millan thought it proper to acquaint his wife and her daughter with this whole proceeding; and the latter, who had flattered herself Mr. Lester's neglect was affected, and only one of her coquettish arts, for the first time felt real grief of heart, and a sincere disapprobation of her own conduct, which she confessed to Miss Millan with great frankness, telling her she was now convinced that a good understanding and judicious behaviour were more powerful than beauty; and if she would take her under her tuition, and make her like herself, she would find her a most obedient disciple.

Miss Millan was extremely desirous of doing every thing in her power to serve her friend; and they agreed, that if they could obtain the consent of their parents, they would, in about two months, go to a small country-house Mr. Millan had just taken near London, intending it for his summer's residence. The reason for their delaying the execution of their scheme so long, was Miss Arran's fear lest her retirement should be thought, as it was in fact, the effect of her disappointment in Mr. Lester. Mr.

Mrs. Millan readily complied, and the young ladies left London in the beginning of February, before the country could be ſuppoſed to have great charms for perſons ſo young; the reaſon aſſigned to their acquaintance was, Miſs Arran's want of health, which indeed was apparent from the decay of her complexion; for her conſtitution, which had been a good deal impaired by the fatigues of a diſſipated life, could not ſupport unhurt the additional ill effects of vexation.

As ſoon as they were in the country Miſs Millan commenced her office; ſhe applied herſelf to perfecting Miſs Arran in the French language, with which ſhe, till then, had but a very ſuperficial acquaintance; taught her geography, led her into reading a regular courſe of hiſtory, turned her whole converſation towards inſtructing her in ſome branch of knowledge, and, above all, took every opportunity of correcting her morals, inſpiring her with true religion, and repreſſing the flippancy of manner, and all the other faſhionable follies ſhe had acquired; a taſk which Miſs Arran's natural good underſtanding and ſweetneſs of temper made by no means difficult, as ſhe was ſoon convinced that Miſs Millan's cenſures were juſt.

In the ſummer Mr. and Mrs. Millan came to them, but the young ladies deſired to be excuſed returning to town the next winter, and ſpent that and the following ſummer in the country in the cloſeſt application: during their reſidence here, they became acquainted with a gentleman, whoſe name was Manners, whom Miſs Millan charmed extremely; indeed he was much prejudiced in her favour before he ſaw her, by Mr. Leſter's deſcription, that gentleman being his intimate friend. About the middle of the ſecond winter of their retirement they went to London, where Mr. Manners continued his viſits, and declared his intentions. Miſs Millan had not received his addreſſes with indifference, and his fortune and character were ſo good, that her father with pleaſure united them; nor could Miſs Arran regret the having no longer ſo ſincere a friend under the ſame roof, as Miſs Millan had the faireſt proſpect of happineſs imaginable, and was to ſpend good part of her time in London. Miſs Arran's beauty had received advantage by her two years abſence from town; ſhe had regained that bloom and vivacity of countenance which health only can give; but in other reſpects the alteration was ſtill more ſtriking; from a trifling, ignorant, compleat coquette, ſhe was changed into a rational, accompliſhed,

and agreeable woman; her converſation pleaſed no leſs than her perſon, and though ſhe had fewer danglers, their places were well ſupplied by many real friends, and ſincere lovers; but Mr. Leſter's idea ſtill remained too deeply engraven on her heart, to ſuffer her to liſten to any of the latter, even though ſome were more conſiderable in fortune and rank. Mrs. Manners obſerving the turn of her mind, contrived at her houſe to renew the acquaintance between Miſs Arran and Mr. Leſter; as her converſation and conduct, inſtead of derogating from, now added charms to her perſon, his paſſion was rekindled, and he became more violently enamoured than ever; but his former inconſtancy diſcouraged him from making known the ſtate of his heart to Miſs Arran, whoſe reſentment he feared would render his preſent ſentiments the ſource of much unhappineſs to him. He told his diſtreſs to Mrs. Manners, who delayed the relief ſhe could have given him, in order to keep up her friend's dignity, as ſome pride in ſuch points is a neceſſary ornament to a female character; but to her ſhe imparted the whole, and when ſhe thought it might be done without impropriety, ſhe encouraged Mr. Leſter to renew his propoſal, and had not only the pleaſure of having her friend moſt happily

married

married within a year after herſelf, but of ſeeing her the object both of general eſteem and admiration, compleatly qualified for every ſituation in life; an improvement to every company, yet happy in retirement; a judicious friend, and the moſt amiable companion in ſocial life; nor did her new and valuable qualifications fail of receiving a conſiderable addition in Mr. Leſter's eſteem, when he learnt that her regard for him had been the cauſe of her acquiring them. Theſe two ladies have, ever ſince their marriage, lived in the ſtricteſt friendſhip; they meet every winter in London, and in ſummer they alternately make each other a pretty long viſit; a thing equally agreeable to their huſbands, between whom a friendſhip no leſs ſincere has for many years ſubſiſted.

I confeſs, my dear Mamma, that I at firſt ſuſpected the truth of good part of this hiſtory, as it ſeemed no improper invention to animate young girls in the purſuit of knowledge; I was inclined to believe that Mrs. Wheatley aimed at turning to our advantage that deſire of eſteem and admiration ſo natural to young people, calling in our vanity to the aſſiſtance of her endeavours; and if ſuch were her intentions, ſhe was not likely to be diſappointed: for I obſerved that the prettieſt of her ſcholars

liſtened with a grave attention, as if they did not like to hear that they muſt add ſo much labour of their own, to what Nature had done for them, before they could be truly amiable; but ſince it was neceſſary, would not loſe the advantage of their charms by omitting it; thoſe on whom fewer perſonal attractions had been beſtowed, ſeemed greatly pleaſed to find a cultivated underſtanding, and good diſpoſition, had more prevailing charms than beauty. I ſuppoſe, if I could hear my ſchool-fellows on the ſubject, I ſhould learn what ſentiments my countenance diſcovered; but it is not my buſineſs to betray them if they were not for my honour; and if they were, I had better be ſilent, as my evidence would not be the moſt credible in ſuch a caſe; beſides, I have but juſt room for my leſſons.

HISTORICAL CATECHISM.

LESSON XI.

Queſt. What account have we of Cyaxares the Firſt?

Anſ. He ſeems to have made a truce with the Aſſyrians; for we find that after he had compoſed the confuſed ſtate of Media, he reconquered the Upper Aſia, which we

we may imagine withdrew itſelf from his dominion, upon the overthrow his father received; he afterwards turned his arms againſt the Aſſyrians, and, having defeated them in a battle, laid ſiege to Nineveh.

Q. Did he take that city?

A. No: before he had reduced it he was obliged to raiſe the ſiege, and to march with the utmoſt expedition to defend his own kingdom againſt an army of Scythians, inhabitants of the borders of Palus Meotis, who had made a powerful irruption into his dominions; but the Scythians vanquiſhed him, and poſſeſſed the Upper Aſia for 28 years.

Q. What other uſe did Cyaxares find for his arms?

A. When he had given up all attempts to expel the Scythians from their new acquired poſſeſſions, and eſtabliſhed the reſt of his kingdom in peace, he determined to renew his war with Aſſyria, and, in conjunction with Nabopolaſſar, again beſieged Nineveh, which they took, killed Saracus, who then ſat on the Aſſyrian throne, and entirely deſtroyed the city.

Q. Was the deſtruction of Nineveh foretold by any of the prophets?

A. The prophets Nahum, Jonah, and Zephaniah, predicted it in very expreſs

terms, above an hundred years before the event.

Q. What followed the deſtruction of this city?

A. Cyaxares ſecured to himſelf great part of Aſſyria, the reſt remained the property of Nabopolaſſar; and Babylon henceforward became the metropolis of Aſſyria, an honour which was before divided between thoſe cities, each being indifferently choſen by their kings, as the ſeat of their empire.

Q. Was Nineveh never rebuilt?

A. A new city was erected out of its ruins, but never roſe to a glory at all equal to the firſt, which was ſixty miles in circumference.

HISTORICAL CATECHISM.

LESSON XII.

Queſt. In what manner were the Scythians at laſt driven out of Upper Aſia?

Anſ. Their force was ſo ſuperior to the Medes, that it could not be effected by open war, but private treachery was more fatal; the Medes pretended a deſire to live in amity with them, a general feaſt was proclaimed throughout the kingdom, and every Median

dian family invited his Scythian neighbours to his houſe. Each careſſed his gueſts, and urged them on to the utmoſt feſtivity, till they were ſo intoxicated with liquor as to be incapable of defending themſelves: the Medes then fell upon them, and maſſacred the greateſt part; thoſe who eſcaped this cruel deſtruction fled to Halyattes king of Lydia, who, either out of generous indignation at ſuch an inhuman breach of hoſpitality, or deſirous of taking advantage of ſuch auxiliaries, to depreſs the power of a neighbouring monarch, declared war againſt Cyaxares. For near ſix years it was carried on with various ſucceſs; but at length was ended by an eclipſe of the Sun, which terrified each party, as a miraculous ſignification of divine anger, and determined them to refer the matter in diſpute to the arbitratorſhip of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and Sunneſis king of Cilicia. Theſe monarchs negotiated a peace between the two contending princes, which was ſtrengthened by the marriage of Aſtyages, ſon to Cyaxares, with Ariena, the daughter of Halyattis. The effect of this eclipſe has been already mentioned in the account of Halyattis king of Lydia.

Q. Who reigned in Babylon and Judea when Cyaxares died?

A. Nebuchadnezzar wore the crown of Babylon, and Zedekiah, younger ſon to Joſiah, had been the tributary king of Judea for almoſt five years.

Q. Who ſucceeded Cyaxares?

A. His ſon Aſtyages, of whom we learn little more than that he was father to Cyaxares the Second, and Mandana, by different wives; the latter of whom he married to Cambyſes, a tributary king of Perſia, or principal perſon in that country, the ſame year that Cyaxares was born.

Q. Did Aſtyages engage in any war?

A. The only military exploit mentioned in the reign of Aſtyages, was his repulſing Evilmerodach, king of Babylon, who invaded Media; and this ſucceſs was attributed in great meaſure to the prudence and courage of Cyrus, ſon to Mandana and Cambyſes, though, at that time, but ſixteen years old.

Q. What name is given to Aſtyages in Scripture?

A. Ahaſuerus.

Believe me, my dear Mamma, your moſt dutiful and affectionate daughter,

MARIA MILTON.

LET-

LETTER IX.

My dear Mamma,

MY laſt letter gave you a deſcription of two living and modern ladies; this, on the contrary, will contain ſome anecdotes of one of the greateſt and worthieſt of the antient heroes; for, as you were pleaſed with the ſchool exerciſes I ſent you, I ſhall continue the cuſtom; and as this day's leſſon comprehended part of the hiſtory of Cyrus, it furniſhed ample materials for the uſual exerciſe in writing. The firſt ſubject given was executed as follows.

The king of Armenia, who had long been tributary to Media, hearing of the league between the Aſſyrians, Lydians, &c. againſt that monarchy, judged it a favourable opportunity to ſhake off the Median yoke, believing that ſo many powerful enemies would leave Cyaxares little leiſure to maintain his ſupremacy over Armenia; and therefore he refuſed to pay the accuſtomed tribute, or furniſh the demanded auxiliaries. Cyrus's ſuperior courage deſpiſed an enemy which might have embarraſſed his uncle Cyaxares, and he determined to reduce a rebellious vaſſal to obedience, before the confederate kings could join their forces:

forces: he judged that in this caſe, ſtratagem would ſupply the place of a great army, and compleat his purpoſe in a ſhorter time. Under a pretence of hunting on the Armenian hills, a practice not unuſual with him, he had a body of cavalry thither, and before that king received any intelligence which could awaken his ſuſpicion, and put him on his guard, Cyrus found means of taking him, his queen and family priſoners, Tigranes, his eldeſt ſon, only excepted.

Cyrus ordered that the captive king and his family ſhould be brought into the field where he was encamped, and cauſed them to be ſurrounded by his little army, who were to be witneſſes of the puniſhment he deſigned to inflict on the perfidious king. At this inſtant Tigranes arrived from a long journey, entirely ignorant of the misfortune which had befallen his father during his abſence; but a moment's obſervation ſhewed him his parents, his brothers and ſiſters, and, what ſtill more tenderly affected him, his beloved wife, in captivity, and at the mercy of an exaſperated conqueror. Cyrus informed him how critical that inſtant was, by telling him that he was arrived in time to be preſent at his father's trial; and then, after requiring the king to give him his word that he would anſwer with truth and ſincerity to every thing he ſhould aſk, he put

put ſuch appoſite queſtions to him, relative to the offence of which he had been guilty towards the king of Media, that the king of Armenia was reduced to aknowledge himſelf deſerving of death, and to pronounce the fatal ſentence againſt himſelf. Tigranes, with all the eloquence the moſt poignant grief could inſpire, beſought Cyrus not to take the vengeance which he allowed was juſtly due, as he would thereby deſtroy his father when he was become more capable than ever of proving ſerviceable to him, ſince the natural conſequences of his treachery muſt teach him that wiſdom which is more uſeful than military force or accumulated wealth, and at once convince him of the great power and abilities of Cyrus, and his own incapacity to execute any deſigns againſt him; adding, that "by generouſly "pardoning his paſt offence, he would at- "tach him to his ſervice by the ſtrongeſt "ties of gratitude, which could not fail "of rendering him the moſt zealous and "faithful of his friends."

The humanity of Cyrus's heart pleaded the cauſe of the captive monarch in ſtill more prevailing terms than the filial piety of Tigranes could inſpire; and relinquiſhing all thoughts of revenge, he told him he was free; but aſked what he would give to obtain

obtain the liberty of his queen and family? The king replied, his whole kingdom.

Cyrus then demanded of Tigranes, at what price he would ranſom his wife? "At the price of a thouſand lives, were I "poſſeſſed of them," replied the prince. Cyrus invited them all to an entertainment; after which, taking leave of them in the moſt friendly manner, he reſtored the king to his former dignity, only augmenting the tribute, and number of auxiliaries he was before obliged to furniſh, and releaſed the priſoners without ranſom.

As the Armenians returned home they were laviſh in Cyrus's praiſe, their hearts overflowing with gratitude, and a juſt ſenſe of his merit. In this the ladies bore their part: one admired his beauty, another the gracefulneſs of his manner, which added charms to his generoſity; ſome expatiated on the nobleneſs of his mind, others on his uncommon wiſdom; the wife of Tigranes was alone ſilent during this general panegyric; upon which Tigranes aſked her what ſhe thought of Cyrus's perſon and deportment? "I did not obſerve "him," anſwered ſhe. "Not obſerve "him," cried Tigranes! what other ob-"ject could attract your notice?" "The "man," replied the princeſs, "who ſaid "he

" he would gladly ranſom me at the ex-
" pence of a thouſand lives."

Mrs. Wheatley obſerved, that ſhe could not recollect in any hiſtory the female character ſo amiably and ſo conciſely deſcribed: " The ſtrong impreſſions of gratitude, the " tendereſt affection, the moſt entire at-" tachment to her huſband, are all," ſaid ſhe, " comprehended in that ſhort anſwer; " and ſuch a charm has tenderneſs, that " one cannot forbear loving the princeſs, " while we are contented with only ad-" miring Cyrus; ſo much does ſhe draw " off the attention of our minds from the " generoſity of that truly heroic prince."

I confeſs I am much of Mrs. Wheatley's opinion, I think I never read a ſtory which pleaſed me ſo much; but ſome authors (ſingle men we will ſuppoſe) have thrown in an inviduous inſinuation, ſaying, that this tender couple were newly married. Thus judge the men of modern times; they believe it impoſſible that a man ſhould ſo highly value his wife; or a woman, blind to the charms of a royal and youthful conqueror, have no eyes but for her huſband, had they long borne that relation to each other; yet, in Cyrus's days, the caſe might be very different; men perhaps did not place their happineſs in variety, nor women think coquettry the chief joy of life:

life: poſſibly diſſipation had not rendered both ſexes incapable of fixed principles, and laſting impreſſions; and the prince and princeſs of Armenia, however incredible it may now appear, might, after being married twenty years, prize the poſſeſſion of each other above life. But when one gets into ſuch ſtrange ſuppoſitions, it is time to change the ſubject, or into what iuprobabilities or paradoxes may one not wander; I ſhall therefore inſert another exerciſe of the day.

In the victory which Cyrus obtained over the Aſſyrians, Lydians, &c. among other priſoners taken by the conquering army, was Panthea, wife to Abradates king of Suſiana: her rank and beauty made her appear a prize worthy of Cyrus, to him therefore ſhe was deſtined by his officers. When they acquainted him with the uncommon charms of the priſoner they deſigned to preſent, though he readily conſented ſhe ſhould be allotted to him, yet he refuſed to ſee her, fearing leſt his affections ſhould be engaged by a woman who he could not love with innocence; nor, for ſuch is the conſequence of guilt, without enervating the vigour of his mind. He accepted her only as her protector, determined to ſave her from the inſults of others, at the ſame time that he

he preſerved himſelf from being miſled by any latent weakneſs in his own heart.

Araſpes, a young nobleman of Media, ſollicited this dangerous charge; exceeding his maſter in confidence as much as he fell ſhort of him in virtue, he declared himſelf above temptation. Cyrus warned him of the perilous office he ſo earneſtly beſought, and, after proper advice, entruſted the princeſs to his care.

Self-confidence is ſeldom a proof of ſtrength. Araſpes could not reſiſt the influence of his fair captive's charms; he became paſſionately in love with her; and when he found that the moſt inſinuating addreſſes made no impreſſion on her heart, inſolence took the place of reſpect, and his behaviour became ſo alarming to Panthea, that ſhe found herſelf under a neceſſity of acquainting Cyrus with her fears, and of the juſt cauſe ſhe had for them. The prince, careful of her ſafety, yet compaſſionating the weakneſs of Araſpes, ſent for him, mildly reproved him for his ungenerous conduct, ſeverely reproaching himſelf for having been prevailed upon to expoſe him to ſo dangerous a trial, and placed the princeſs in ſafer hands.

Panthea, charmed with the nobleneſs of Cyrus's conduct, wrote to her huſband an account of what had paſſed, informing him how

how generouſly ſhe had been protected by the man he thought his enemy. Abradates, overjoyed to hear of his wife's ſafety, and convinced that he ſhould incur no danger by obeying the impulſe of his gratitude to ſo generous a prince, repaired to the Median camp, received his beloved wife from the hands of the young hero; and engaged in a ſtrict alliance with him; which he faithfully obſerved, fighting in the foremoſt ranks of his army till the battle of Thymbra, wherein he was ſlain.

Panthea had dreſſed him in a fine ſuit of armour, with which ſhe preſented him before he went to that engagement; and though her apprehenſions for his life drew tears from her eyes, yet ſhe exhorted him to ſhew himſelf worthy of ſo noble a friend.

It was Cyrus's cuſtom after a battle to viſit the ſick and wounded, to comfort them under their pains, and ſee them properly attended. After the victory of Thymbra, Panthea, as moſt diſtreſſed, was the firſt object of his care; he went to condole with her on a misfortune which he himſelf ſincerely lamented; and found her on the ground almoſt frantic with deſpair, embracing the bloody, breathleſs corpſe of Abradates. Cyrus ſympatized in her affliction, and by every means which friendſhip and pity could ſuggeſt, he ſo far ſoothed her grief, that he left

left her in a more compoſed ſtate of mind; but though he had quieted, he could not comfort her; her diſtreſs was greater than ſhe could ſupport, and deteſting the thought of living after Abradates was no more, ſhe ſtabbed herſelf, and fell lifeleſs on his body; leaving Cyrus no other means of teſtifying his eſteem for both, than interring them in one grave, and erecting a monument over them; which, as if even time reſpected the memory of ſo worthy a pair, for many ages withſtood the ravages of that mercileſs deſtroyer.

Mrs. Wheatley obſerved, that there could not be a better leſſon than this ſtory conveys: "We ſee, continued ſhe, the wiſdom "of avoiding temptation. Such will ever "be the ſuggeſtions of humility, which, "conſcious that however pure the heart "may be at that inſtant, yet, by nature "weak, we can depend upon its integrity "no longer than we keep it as free from "temptations as poſſible: It might indeed "be proof againſt the moſt fiery trial, but "the probability is ſo much againſt it, that "it is the higheſt folly to expoſe ourſelves to "the danger; a danger, which by ſuch ſelf-"confidence, we are rendered unworthy to "overcome. We are naturally ſuſceptible "of ſtrong fears for every thing we love: "if virtue is among that number, our ap-

"prehenſions

" prehenſions of ſwerving from it will be ſo
" great, that we ſhall carefully fly every
" temptation that may ſeduce us.

" Thoſe who unneceſſarily therefore, ex-
" poſe themſelves to temptations, give evi-
" dent proof that ſin does not appear to
" them cloathed with any great terrors.
" Cyrus had as much reaſon as any man to
" depend on the ſtrength of his own virtue;
" but he was wiſe, and knew the frailty and
" deceitfulneſs of the human heart. Araſ-
" pes was weak, but confident, and in him
" all preſuming perſons, puffed up with the
" conceit of their own unconquerable vir-
" tue, may ſee their pictures repreſented in
" the moſt lively manner."

I am afraid, my dear madam, that, between the leſſons and ſtories I ſend you, you will begin to find my letters tedious; eſpecially as many of the latter cannot be new to you; and I fear you will think you might as well be at ſchool yourſelf, as to be drawn in to peruſe all our taſks. To us the matter appears in a different light, we ſee few people beyond our own ſociety, and hear ſo little of what is going forward in the world, that Semiramis is oftener the ſubject of our thoughts and converſation than the empreſſes of Germany of Ruſſia: and Cyrus appears of more conſequence to us than any living king but our own. We are indeed ſometimes led to compare

pare the manners that prevailed in the moſt ancient kingdoms with preſent cuſtoms; but as for the female faſhions in vogue, I queſtion whether any part of modern dreſs has engroſſed more of our attention than the Perſian Tiara, or purple robes of the Medes.

Mrs. Wheatley deſired another of the young ladies to write the ſtory of Cyrus's birth and death, which, however fabulous, had been given by many hiſtorians. This ſhe did as follows:

The lovers of fables and wonders tell us, that Aſtyages, king of Media, was warned by a dream, that his daughter Mandana ſhould bring forth a ſon, who would become Lord of all Aſia. To prevent the accompliſhment of this prediction, he married her to Cambyſes a Perſian, eſteeming him of inferior conſequence to any Median. About a year after this marriage, Aſtyages's apprehenſions being increaſed by another dream of the ſame import, he ſent for his daughter, who was then pregnant, ſetting a guard over her till ſhe was delivered of a ſon, whom he gave to the care of Harpagus, a man in whom he much confided, charging him to take the infant home, and deſtroy it with his own hands.

To the firſt part of the injunction Harpagus was obedient, carrying the child to his own houſe; but unwilling to act the part

part of an executioner, he transferred this deteſtable office to Mithradates, one of the king's herdſmen, ordering him to expoſe the infant on the moſt dangerous and unfrequented part of the mountains, threatening him with the ſevereſt torments if he neglected to perfom this cruel command. Mithradates's humanity ſeems to have been overcome by the fear of puniſhment: overwhelmed with horror, he carried the infant home, but with a full purpoſe of executing the orders he had received. At his arrival he found his wife juſt brought to bed of a dead child, and to her he communicated the melancholy commiſſion he had received, ſhewing the victim deſtined to the king's jealouſy, and informing her of the rank of the infant, with which he had been acquainted by Harpagus's ſervants. The poor woman, touched with the engaging ſmiles of the innocent babe, prevailed on her huſband to expoſe the dead body of their new born child in the rich veſtments wherewith the young Cyrus was clad, and to conſent that they ſhould breed up the young prince as their own ſon; Mithradates approved the expedient, and the dead born babe was produced three days after, to ſome whom Harpagus had deputed to ſee whether his orders had been executed; and by them was royally interred.

When

When Cyrus was about ten years old, being engaged in play with other children of his age, he was in ſome of their ſports choſen king, and cauſed the ſon of a Median nobleman, who had diſobeyed his orders, to be ſeverely whipt. Of this treatment the boy complained to his father, who applied to the king to revenge, in an exemplary manner, the indignity his ſon had received from the ſervile offſpring of one of his herdſmen. Aſtyages promiſed him full ſatisfaction; and the next day cauſed Cyrus and his reputed father to be brought before him. He then aſked the lad, how he, who was ſo low in birth and condition in life, could dare to abuſe the ſon of one of the principal Lords in the kingdom?

Cyrus replied, he had done nothing that he could not thoroughly juſtify; that he had been choſen king by the boys of that neighbourhood as the moſt worthy of that dignity; and in conſequence of this election, they had all obeyed his commands, except the young man whoſe cauſe his majeſty eſpouſed, who for his diſobedience deſerved the puniſhment he had inflicted.

We are told that Aſtyages, ſtruck with the lad's ſpirit, a nobleneſs of mind, and an eloquence ſurpaſſing both his years and birth; and imagining he ſaw in his perſon ſome reſemblance to himſelf, together with the

the ſimilitude of age between the youth and that of his grand-ſon if living, conceived ſome ſuſpicions of the truth; and at length by threats extorted the ſecret from Mithradates.

Hereupon he ſent for Harpagus who on the ſight of the herdſman found that falſehood could not avail him, and therefore confeſſed he had entruſted the execution to Mithradates. Aſtyages diſſembled his anger; told him that he had never had his conſcience at reſt ſince he had commanded his grand-ſon to be murdered, and was glad he had been no better obeyed; deſiring him to ſend his ſon to wait on the young Cyrus, and to come himſelf that night to ſup with him. Harpagus, rejoicing that this event had turned out ſo happily, diſpached his only ſon directly, who no ſooner entered the palace, than he was ſlain, and his body, dreſſed in various manners, was ſerved up at night for his wretched father's ſupper; who came as ordered to the feaſt. After Harpagus had ſupped, the king aſked him "how he "liked his entertainment;" to which having replied, with a courter-like politeneſs, an officer, according to the commands he had received, entered with the head, hands, and feet of Harpagus's ſon in a baſket, deſiring him to take ſuch part as he liked beſt. He beheld this ſhocking ſpectacle without any

any emotion of countenance or the leaſt expreſſion of ſorrow. The king then aſked him, "if he knew with what ſort of meat he had "been entertained?" Harpagus replied, "that he knew very well; and muſt always "be pleaſed with what his king thought fit "to ordain:" Then collecting the mangled remains of his ſon, returned home to inter them: however, the ſame hiſtorians tell us, that his ſubmiſſion was only feigned; diſſembling his reſentment till Cyrus, whom his grandfather had ſent to his parents in Perſia, arrived to man's eſtate: Harpagus then incited him to rebel againſt Aſtyages, conveying a letter to him in the inſide of an hare. In this he ſucceeded; Cyrus invaded Media, and Aſtyages, unmindful of the injury he had done Harpagus, truſted to him the command of his army; but he, having before corrupted the greateſt part of the officers, went over with them to Cyrus, who afterwards defeated Aſtyages, took him priſoner, and ſeized his throne. The ſame hiſtorians likewiſe give a different account of Cyrus's death; they tell us that Cyrus invaded the Maſſagetes, and, defeating them in battle, took the young prince of that country priſoner; who, impatient of confinement, put an end to his own life. This exaſperating his mother, queen Tomyris, ſhe gave a ſecond battle to Cyrus, wherein ſhe

was conqueror; and Cyrus being killed in the engagement, ſhe cauſed his head to be cut off, and threw it into a veſſel filled with human blood, ſaying, "now glut thyſelf "with the blood after which thou haſt ſo "inſatiably thirſted."

HISTORICAL CATECHISM.

LESSON XIII.

Queſt. Who ſucceeded Aſtyages?

Anſ. His ſon Cyaxares the ſecond, who made his nephew Cyrus the chief commander of his armies, that prince being only a year younger than himſelf. Nerigliſſar, the murderer of Evilmerodach, and his ſucceſſor on the throne of Babylon, attached Media, and Cyaxares carried on a war under the conduct of Cyrus, with the Babylonians; through the reigns of Nerigliſſar, Laboroſoarchod, and Narbonadius or Belſhazzar, till the entire deſtruction of that empire by the taking of Babylon.

Q. In what manner did Cyaxares treat this conquered country?

A. He aboliſhed their laws, and introduced thoſe of the Medes and Perſians. He divided the kingdom of Babylon into 120 provinces, over which he appointed governors;

nors; theſe were under the direction of three preſidents who were to reſide near Cyaxares's perſon, to whom only they were ſubordinate, and by whoſe command they were to direct every thing in that kingdom.

Q. Who was the chief of theſe preſidents?

A. Daniel, who had been ſixty-five years firſt-miniſter to the kings of Babylon. It was by Cyaxares that Daniel was thrown into the lion's den, for worſhiping the true God, when the king had forbiden all adoration, except that of his image, for thirty days; but the miracle by which Daniel was preſerved, encreaſed the eſteem in which Cyaxares held him, and ſtrengthened his authority. Cyrus then marched into Syria, ſettled the affairs of that province, and ſubdued the other nations as far as the Red Sea and the confines of Ethiopia.

Q. What name is given to Cyaxares the ſecond in ſcripture?

A. That of Darius the Mede.

Q. How long did he live after the reduction of Babylon?

A. Only two years, after which Cyrus ſucceeded to his whole empire, having married Mandana the daughter of Cyaxares, while he was engaged in the Babylonian war. Cambyſes, Cyrus's father, died about the ſame time with Cyaxares, and thoſe various ſtates became united into one empire, and all in-

cluded under the name of Perſia, though the country, originally ſo called, made perhaps the ſmalleſt part of it; and deſerved that diſtinction only by having given birth to Cyrus.

HISTORICAL CATECHISM.

LESSON XIV.

The HISTORY of PERSIA.

Queſt. What particularly diſtinguiſhed the firſt year that Cyrus alone governed the new extenſive kingdom of Perſia?

Anſ. At that time expired the ſeventy years of captivity, to which the Jews had been condemned, and of which their prophets had ſo often forewarned them. Cyrus, in all probability, at the perſuaſion of Daniel, publiſhed an edict, whereby he permited them to return to Jeruſalem, and to rebuild their temple; for the accompliſhment of which event it may be preſumed, God had ſo greatly favoured Cyrus, both in the many virtues with which he had bleſſed him, and the great ſucceſs he had granted to his arms.

Q. Was the temple built according to the permiſſion given?

A.

A. No; as the wiſeſt prince, eſpecially in ſo extenſive an empire, cannot diſpoſe all his ſubjects to obey him with readineſs and alacrity, ſo Cyrus's favourable diſpoſition towards the Jews was in ſome degree fruſtrated by the Samaritans, the great enemies of the Jews; theſe, by bribing the perſons whom the king appointed to aſſiſt in the building of the temple, and to furniſh the Jews with all things neceſſary for the undertaking, engaged them to delay the execution of the edict, by which means the work went on very ſlowly, and was far from being compleated at his death.

Q. How long did Cyrus live after his uncle's deceaſe?

A. Seven years, during which he enjoyed uninterrupted peace and tranquility; dividing his reſidence between the three kingdoms that compoſed his great empire, at ſuch ſeaſons of the year as beſt ſuited their various climates: for his own advantage, he thus avoided all the exceſſes of heat and cold; and, to the great benefit of his ſubjects, had opportunity to watch over the government of the whole, to ſettle the adminiſtration in the beſt and wiſeſt manner, and to ſee that the execution was anſwerable to the plan.

Q. To what age did he attain?

A. He was about ſeventy years old when

he died; and had enjoyed that uninterrupted ſtate of good health to which temperance is ſo conducive: when he found death approaching, he aſſembled his two ſons, and the chief officers of ſtate, and after returning thanks to the Gods for the long courſe of proſperity they had granted to him, he declared Cambyſes, his eldeſt ſon, ſucceſſor to his crown; and bequeathed to Smerdis the younger many conſiderable governments: he then gave them excellent moral and political inſtructions; recommending a perfect harmony between each other, great reverence to the Gods, and tender care of the numerous ſubjects of ſo extenſive an empire.

Q. When did this event happen?

A. Five hundred and thirty years before the birth of our Saviour.

GEOGRAPHICAL CATECHISM.

LESSON IV.

Queſt. How many leſſer circles are there?

Anſ. Four; namely, the two tropics, and the two polar circles: the tropics are ſo called from a Greek word, ſignifying to turn; becauſe when the ſun, in its annual courſe through the ecliptic, reaches one of thoſe circles, it turns towards the other.

Q. By what name is the northern tropic diſtinguiſhed?

A. It is called the tropic of Cancer, becauſe it touches the ecliptic at that ſign; and the ſouthern tropic, for the like reaſon, is called the tropic of Capricorn, for touching the ecliptic at the ſign Capricornus.

Q. At what diſtance are theſe tropics from the equator?

A. Each is twenty-three degrees and an half from it; and the polar circles are at the like diſtance from their reſpective poles.

Q. By what appellations are they diſtinguiſhed?

A. By the names of the poles to which they are neareſt, the northern being called the arctic circle, the ſouthern the antarctic circle.

Q. What are the zones?

A. The ſpaces included between the poles and the four leſſer circles.

Q. How many zones are there?

A. Five; thoſe between the two poles and their circles being called the frigid or cold zones; thoſe between the arctic circle and tropic of Cancer, and antarctic circle and tropic of Capricorn, the temperate zones; and that ſpace between the two tropics the torrid or burning zone.

Q. What are the ſmaller lines on the globe, parallel to the equator, which are

there drawn proportionably closer as they approach the poles?

A. They are called parallels of latitude; and the spaces between each are named climates.

Q. Of what use are these lines?

A. They help us to judge of the different lengths of the days in each, which vary half an hour in length each climate, as far as the polar circles, and from thence to the poles an hour each climate, the length of the day increasing gradually from the equator to the poles?

Q. What are the lines called which encircle the globe the contrary way?

A. Parallels of longitde, or meridians.

Q. Is not one of these more strongly marked than the rest?

A. Yes, and this is called the first meridian, from which we begin to count the longitude.

Q. Where is this first meridian fixed?

A. Geographers differ in the place of fixing it, but the newest and best globes and maps fix it at Pike Teneriff, in the isle of Fero.

I will add no more to a letter already too long, than my sincere assurances of being ever, my dear Mamma, your most affectionate and dutiful daughter,

MARIA MILTON.

LET-

LETTER X.

My dear Mamma,

YOUR laſt letter kindly tells me, that my fear of wearying you with the hiſtorical anecdotes I ſent, were vain. It gives me great pleaſure to find they afford you the means of giving my grand-pappa a moment's entertainment, for it is difficult to amuſe one ſo reduced by age and ſickneſs; ſince the confinement to which his condition obliges you, deprives you of that variety of thoughts and ideas, ſo neceſſary to entertain an invalid. And, as you kindly obſerve, I have reaſon to hope, that from bearing to hear my letters, he may be brought to ſupport the ſight of me; though from what can I reaſonably expect ſo happy a change, when it was not produced by the deſire of gratifying the beſt of daughters, who ſo readily gave up every comfort in life to nurſe his declining age, as ſoon as the want of that care, which nothing but filial piety could ſecure to him, laid him almoſt under a neceſſity of forgiving and receiving her once more under his roof. If I could repine at any circumſtance, which has rendered me more beloved by you, I ſhould be ſorry that I ſo

ſtrongly reſemble my dear father, ſince that renders me ſo odious in my grand-papa's ſight; for that, I imagine, is my great offence; as he told me, that in me my father ſeemed to live again. But why ſhould I dwell on the only circumſtance which afflicts me? I will carry my thoughts far back beyond my own exiſtence, by tranſcribing ſome of the exerciſes of theſe two laſt days; but you muſt expect very different ſtories from thoſe I ſent you laſt; for Cambyſes, the ſon and ſucceſſor of Cyrus, inherited none of his father's virtues; on the contrary, appears to have been one of thoſe monſters of cruelty, whoſe actions can be no way accounted for, but as the reſults of madneſs. Cambyſes had a ſiſter, named Meroc, whoſe uncommon beauty determined him to marry her, whereby he ſet a deteſtable example, followed by too many of his ſucceſſors, rather from political motives than from love. His fondneſs for this lady induced him to carry her with him in all his war-like expeditions. She accompanied him into Egypt; and, in the attempt he made to invade Ethiopia, the king of which country, learning his intention, ſent him an Ethiopian bow and arrow, with a meſſage importing, "that were "he an honeſt man, he would not deſire the "poſſeſſion of a country to which he had no "title; withal, adviſing him, never to ad-

"vance

" vance into his territories till their Perſians " were able to bend that bow with the ſame " facility as an Ethiopian ;" Smerdis, brother to Cambyſes, was the only perſon in the camp whoſe ſtrength proved ſufficient to effect it. So inſignificant a ſuperiority excited a ſtronger jealouſy in Cambyſes, than he had felt at being excelled by Smerdis in many things, far more eſſential ; and, no longer able to bear the ſight of him, he ſent him back into Perſia, and ſoon after, having dreamt he was told, that Smerdis ſat on his throne, he conceived a ſuſpicion that he was conſpiring againſt him, whereupon he cauſed him to be put to death.

Meroc, who loved her brother Smerdis, was much affected by his unhappy fate ; but the fear of his murderer obliged her to conceal her grief, till one day, that Cambyſes was amuſing himſelf with a battle between a young lion and a dog, the former having the advantage ; another dog, of the ſame litter with that before engaged, came to the aſſiſtance of his half-ſubdued brother, and performed his part ſo ſucceſsfully, that they conquered the lion ; an incident, which ſo tenderly touched Meroc, that ſhe could not reſtrain her tears. Cambyſes inſiſted, on knowing the occaſion of them in ſo peremptory a manner, that ſhe found herſelf obliged to tell him, " that the combat they

" beheld,

" beheld, reminding her of her brother " Smerdis, ſhe had not been able to refrain " from weeping, to think how much his " fate differed from that of the dog, whoſe " life had been ſaved by fraternal love, where- " as Smerdis had found no brother to de- " fend him, but, on the contrary, owed his " death to a brother's hand;" a reproach, which ſo violently enraged Cambyſes, that, notwithſtanding the charms whereby he had been tempted to form ſo criminal an alliance, he gave her a blow which proved fatal. Mrs. Wheatley obſerved, that there was ſomething extremely beautiful in this little incident of the two dogs; and the effect it had on Meroc was very natural; for nothing could be more affecting to her, who ſilently grieved for the unfortunate death of a brother, than ſo ſtriking a proof of the advantages ariſing from fraternal love; " in- " deed, added ſhe, there could not have been " invented a better fable, to recommend fami- " ly concord, which is not only one of our " greateſt duties, but a thing of the higheſt " advantage. What affection can we ſup- " poſe ſtronger than that which grows up " with us from childhood; continually " ſtrengthening by the comforts and aſſiſt- " ances which ever ariſe from it? Virtue, " in ſuch a connexion, finds its higheſt " gratification; and even ſome of our vices

" meet

" meet with a reſource: there our pride,
" our vanity and ſelf-intereſt are engaged;
" for a well-united family will always be
" powerful, though each ſingly, would be
" inſignificant."

Another inſtance of Cambyſes's cruelty characteriſes that prince, and ſhews how powerfully the ſervile fear of a tyrant can operate; therefore I will inſert it.

Cambyſes, having very earneſtly preſſed Prexaſpes, one of his principal favourites, to tell him what opinion the Perſians entertained of him, he anſwered, " that they greatly
" admired the many excellent qualities, which
" ſhone ſo conſpicuouſly in him, but wiſh-
" ed he was leſs fond of wine. By that,
" replied Cambyſes, I underſtand that they
" imagine, I thereby impair my faculties,
" and am at thoſe times no longer maſter
" of myſelf; of the falſhood of that inſinu-
" ation, you yourſelf ſhall judge; and, cal-
" ling for wine, he drank even a much
" larger quantity than uſual. He then
" ordered the ſon of Prexaſpes to ſtand at
" the farther end of the room, with his left
" hand raiſed to his head: he called for his
" bow, and, declaring he aimed at his heart,
" drew the bow and ſhot the young man,
" and cauſing him to be opened, he pre-
" ſented the heart to the father, ſhewing
" him that the arrow had in reality tranſfix-

" ed

" ed it; and aſked him, if the wine had ei-
" ther rendered his ſight leſs perfect, or
" his hand leſs ſteady." It is ſcarcely poſ-
ſible to imagine a perſon more deſerving of
compaſſion than Prexaſpes at that inſtant,
if hiſtory had not, by recording his anſwer,
rendered him as odious as the tyrant, for
there we are told, that to that inſulting
queſtion he replied, with perfect compoſure,
" Apollo could not have ſhot better."

Mrs. Wheatley obſerved, that this abject
flattery, even at ſuch a time, was leſs ſurpri-
ſing in a wretch, who had been the inſtrument
employed by Cambyſes to murder Smerdis,
than that he ſhould venture to hint a diſ-
agreeable truth to his prince; an action too
dangerous to be expected from any but the
moſt virtuous; for even good kings, from
being continually poiſoned by flattery, can
ſeldom bear that ſtrongeſt proof of the ho-
neſty and real affection of their ſervants;
" nor ſhall I, continued ſhe, confine this diſ-
" like of diſagreeable truths to perſons of
" ſuch high ſtation: it is common to thoſe
" of every rank; few people can ſupport the
" kindeſt and gentleſt reproof, and yet, in
" reality, if a friend never cenſures us, we
" have good reaſon either to ſuſpect his ſin-
" cerity, or our own temper, which, by re-
" ceiving with an ill grace every contradic-
" tion to our ſentiments, diſcourages him

" from

" from attempting to rectify our errors." It will make my letter unreaſonably long; yet, my inclination is ſtrong to inſert another ſtory, notwithſtanding that the only relation it bears to Cambyſes is, that, by the death of the man who is the ſubject of it, the iſle of Samos became dependant on the Perſian empire, over which Cambyſes at that time reigned.

Policrates, king of Samos, though poſſeſſed only of a ſmall iſland, was one of the richeſt princes of the age, extremely powerful, and remarkable for an uninterrupted ſeries of good fortune and proſperity. In every undertaking he was ſucceſsful, in every private circumſtance moſt proſperous. Amaſis, king of Egypt, who had for many years been united in the ſtricteſt alliance with him, conſidering the viciſſitude of human affairs, and the proportion of good and evil, which compoſes the lot of all men, wrote him a letter expreſſing his apprehenſions leſt ſo uncommon a ſhare of proſperity ſhould at length be balanced by ſome extraordinary misfortune; and adviſing him to procure to himſelf ſome mortification, which might in a degree temper the torrent of good fortune that poured in upon him, and by moderating, render it more laſting. Polycrates's great vice was covetouſneſs, which made him think of an expedient, that to others ſeems

too

too trifling a ſacrifice to his good fortune: he had a ring which he highly valued; this, therefore, he threw into the ſea, as an act of mortification; but many days had not paſſed, before a fiſherman having taken a fiſh of an uncommon ſize preſented it to him; and, on opening it to dreſs it, the ring was found in its ſtomach, and reſtored to the king; who, pleaſed with recovering a jewel he valued, ſent an account of what had paſſed to Amaſis, obſerving the luckineſs of the accident.

Amaſis, forming a different judgment of this circumſtance, wrote him in anſwer; that ſince the fickle goddeſs, fortune, had refuſed to accept of this voluntary ſacrifice, he was more than ever convinced, that ſhe was determined to make him feel the cruel conſequences of her inſtability; and as he feared their alliance might draw himſelf into ſome ſhare of the misfortunes, which he doubted not would befal one hitherto ſo highly favoured by her, he renounced his friendſhip, and for the future would hold no connexion or correſpondence with him. Not long after this event Oretes, to whom Cambyſes had entruſted the government of an adjacent province, deſirous of conquering Samos, and of plundering the treaſures of ſo wealthy a prince, ſenſible that it would be a difficult taſk to take it by force, reſolved to attempt it by ſtratagem. Accordingly, he pretended

to

to have received injuries from Cambyſes, which had determined him to ſeek refuge in Samos, if Polycrates, on his delivering up to him part of the great treaſures, of which he pretended himſelf poſſeſſed, would ſecure to him the enjoyment of the reſt: he knew that prince's foible, and directed his battery accordingly. Polycrates ſent a truſty perſon to view theſe treaſures, to whom Oretes ſhewed a number of bags, filled for that purpoſe with ſtones and other heavy materials; the report of which proved ſo ſtrong a bait to this avaricious prince, that Oretes, without much difficulty, prevailed on him to come privately to the ſeat of his government, to ſettle the conditions of his reception; but inſtead of receiving the ſums which he expected ſhould by this man be poured into the royal treaſury, he found himſelf in the hands of a treacherous enemy, who immediately put him to death; and, in the confuſion produced in Samos by the unfortunate murder of its king, the iſland proved an eaſy conqueſt.

I know not, "ſaid Mrs. Wheatly, whether Amaſis's, advice was ſo abſurd as it "may appear to many. The inſtability of "human affairs, or in more heatheniſh terms "the fickleneſs of fortune, cannot be de-"nied; there are few, if any, inſtances of "perſons who have, through life, enjoyed a

"conſtant

" conſtant courſe of proſperity; and poſſi-
" bly it may to nothing be more juſtly at-
" tributed, than to the ill effects great ſuc-
" ceſs too generally has on the minds of
" men; the very virtues to which they owe
" it, are frequently deſtroyed thereby; and
" when the cauſe is no more, the effects muſt
" ceaſe. The man, who ſets out in life with
" great temperance, integrity, induſtry, aſ-
" ſiduity, vigilance and proper humility,
" will generally ſucceed; but if ſucceſs, as
" is too often the caſe, renders him luxurious,
" oppreſſive, indolent, careleſs and inſolent,
" he ought no longer to expect to be ſucceſs-
" ful, ſince the virtues, which rendered him
" ſo, are no longer the motives of his ac-
" tions. On this account, thereforc, volun-
" luntary mortifications might prove uſeful,
" as they would by mixing a little uneaſi-
" neſs with a variety of bleſſings, preſerve
" the mind in a more equable ſtate, and
" prevent the intoxication which too often
" ariſes from an exceſs of proſperity; but I
" fear few people, were they to inflict them
" on themſelves, would chuſe to mortify in
" any very eſſential manner, but, like Poly-
" crates, caſt away a ſmall gem out of a great
" treaſure, and think they had made a ſuf-
" ficient ſacrifice to the fickleneſs of fortune.
" But the moſt ſtriking thing in this ſtory
" is Amaſis's conduct, who boldly declares

" what

" what others are contented by their actions
" tacitly to ſhew, that friendſhip in their
" breaſts has no foundation but intereſt;
" Polycrates's felicity made him appear an
" advantageous ally to Amaſis, but when
" he feared that ſome misfortunes would
" befal him, he left him to bear his diſtreſs
" alone; he gladly ſhared in his proſperity,
" but fled from the apprehenſions of his ad-
" verſe fortune; whereas real friendſhip is
" rather ſtrengthened than diminiſhed by
" the misfortunes of a friend; till then,
" our affection only gave him pleaſure, but
" in his diſtreſs, it may afford him aſſiſtance;
" and, by being almoſt neceſſary to him, is
" become his due, of which no conſidera-
" tion can tempt us to rob him; we may
" thereby be rendered unhappy, diſtreſſed,
" perſecuted, but nothing of all this can
" ſhake a real friendſhip; for it is not found-
" ed on intereſt, nor cemented only by proſ-
" perity."

HISTORICAL CATECHISM.

LESSON XV.

Queſt. By what name is Cambyſes called in ſcripture?

Anſ.

Anſ. By that of Ahaſuerus: he aſcended the Perſian throne upon his father's death, he ſoon reſolved on a war with Egypt; in all probability moved to it by Amaſis's refuſal of the tribute which Cyrus had exacted, a tribute which, although he dared not deny to ſo great a conqueror, yet he might reaſonably hope his ſon would not be ſo able to oblige him to pay.

Q. How long was it before Cambyſes invaded Egypt?

A. He entered that kingdom in the fourth year of his reign. Amaſis was then juſt dead, and his ſon Pſammenitus had aſcended the throne, who omited no endeavours to put his kingdom in a ſtate of defence.

Q. What was the event of this war?

A. Pſammenitus was defeated in the firſt battle, and reduced to fly to Memphis. Cambyſes ſent an herald into the city, to ſummon them to ſurrender; him the people killed, as well as thoſe who accompanied him; but it was not long before Cambyſes took the city, and cruelly revenged the murder of his herald, by putting to death two thouſand of the nobleſt Egyptian youths, among whom was the king's ſon. Cambyſes was inclined to treat Pſammenitus with lenity, but finding him attempting to recover his power, condemned him to drink bull's blood, of which he died.

Q.

Q. What was the next expedition in which Cambyſes engaged?

A. Againſt the Ethiopians; which he undertook without having made any proviſion to ſupply his army with neceſſaries during ſo long an expedition: when he arrived at Thebes, he detached 50,000 men againſt the Hammonians, with commiſſion to ravage the country, and burn the oracle of Jupiter Ammon; theſe were ſuppoſed to have periſhed in the Sandy Deſarts, being never after heard of. With the reſt of his army he continued his march againſt the Ethiopians, but before they had proceeded a fifth part of the way they had to go, their proviſions were conſumed: Cambyſes, however, could not be prevailed with to return. When they arrived in the Sandy Deſarts, they were reduced to ſuch extremity of famine, that they were obliged to devour each other; lots being caſt to determine, to whoſe ſhare it ſhould fall to ſerve for food to his fellow-ſoldiers. Though humanity had no power over the king, yet, at length, influenced by fears for his own ſafety, amidſt an army, to whom his mad enterprize gave ſo juſt a cauſe for mutiny, he returned back to Thebes with the remainder of his troops, having loſt great part of them in this ſtrange expedition.

Q.

Q. What particulars are related of Cambyſes's conduct after his return to Thebes?

Q. He cauſed all the temples in that city, which were very numerous, to be pillaged and burnt down; from whence he accumulated immenſe treaſures: from Thebes he went back to Memphis, and at his arrival found the city in the utmoſt joy and feſtivity, becauſe their god Apis had appeared amongſt them: Cambyſes, full of the diſgrace and diſappointment he had received in the Ethiopian expedition, imagined they were rejoicing for his ill ſucceſs; and, ſending for the magiſtrates in a great rage, enquired the cauſe of the general feſtivity: they acquainted him with the real occaſion of it, but he, not believing their account, ordered them all to be ſlain; and ſent for the prieſts; who, having made him the ſame anſwer, he told them, ſince their god was ſo condeſcending as to ſhew himſelf to them, he would be acquainted with him too, and commanded them to bring the deity into his preſence. The prieſts durſt not refuſe to obey. One cannot wonder if Cambyſes was ſurpriſed to ſee a bull appear under that ſacred character; but falling into a great paſſion, he ſtabbed it in the thigh, of which wound it afterwards died; and, reproaching the prieſtsfor their ſtupidity, he cauſed them to be ſeverely ſcourged, and all the people that ſhould be

be found celebrating the feaſt of Apis, to be ſlain.

HISTORICAL CATECHISM.

LESSON XVI.

Queſt. Did Cambyſes long poſſeſs a throne of which he was ſo unworthy?

Anſ. Not long; in the eigth year of his reign, when he arrived in Syria, on his return from Egypt into Perſia, he was met by an herald, who came from Suſa to inform his army, that Smerdis, the ſecond ſon of Cyrus, had been proclaimed king of Perſia, and required them to ſubmit to him.

Q. How happened this, as the king had before put his brother to death?

A. When Cambyſes ſet out on his Egyptian expedition, he had left the government in the hands of Patizithi's, one of the Mages, and a Median by birth. This man had a brother, who much reſembled Smerdis, the ſon of Cyrus, and was called by the ſame name. When he was apprized of the prince's death, this reſemblance, and the univerſal abhorrence which all men had conceived of Cambyſes, encouraged him to engage his brother to perſonate the murdered Smerdis, as that fact was known but to few. Cambyſes

byſes was ſo affected with the account of this revolt, that he burſt into tears, either ſhocked with reflecting on the injury he had done his brother, or with vexation at finding it had been to ſo little purpoſe; and expecting the full completion of his dream, he ordered his army to march directly, that he might ſpeedily endeavour to ſuppreſs this rebellion: but, as he mounted his horſe, his ſword ſlipped out of the ſcabbard and wounded him in the thigh, of which in a few days he died.

Q. Did the Perſians then ſubmit to Smerdis?

A. Yes; for though Cambyſes, before his death, related to them the whole affair of his brother's murder, yet they imagined all he ſaid proceeded only from his hatred to that prince; and the more readily as Prexaſpes, whom the Mages had gained over to their party, declared that he had not killed Smerdis himſelf, but commited to another the execution of the cruel order.

Q. When did Cambyſes's death happen?

A. Five hundred and twenty-three years before Chriſt?

Believe me, dear Madam, your moſt dutiful and affectionate daughter,

MARIA MILTON.

LET-

LETTER X.

My dear Mamma,

ALthough, to hear of the good ſtate of your health, and the continuance of your tender affection towards me, would be ſufficient to make me receive your letters with a moſt joyful and ever grateful heart, yet it is an additional pleaſure to have ſuch frequent and particular accounts of my relations, my old friends, and play-fellows: it is all the gratification I can receive on their account, during my abſence, and ſerves to convince me I am ſtill in the ſame world, into which I was born; a truth, which I might perhaps otherwiſe at times doubt, as every one I ſee or hear of in this houſe are new to me, and the tranſactions which I pick up from newspapers are as foreign to me, as the perſonages of whom I read in hiſtory, and appear onlyas ſubjects for reflection; for which preſent facts afford but ſcanty materials; and with pleaſure I chaſe them from my mind to make room for the more intereſting, and to me equally important, events of paſt ages. This day's reading preſented us with an example of ſo zealous an attachment to the intereſt of a ſovereign, or ſo ſtrong an ambition, as is ſcarcely to be found (I imagine)

among the ſubjects of any modern prince. A moderate quantity of both, I make no doubt, actuates the breaſt of many, but in theſe gentler times they are not purſued by ſuch deſperate method: our refined ſenſations make bodily pains appear in a more formidable light; and few heroes are ſo indifferent to our ſex, as to deface themſelves voluntarily, and ſeek to obtain the ſmiles of a king by becoming objects of horror to the ladies. The man indeed lived in ancient times, and it muſt be allowed his actions ſhew him of no modern date.

The ſtory I allude to is that of Zopyrus, which I will ſend you as it ſerved for a writing exerciſe; one of my ſchool-fellows being required to give an account, by what means Darius got poſſeſſion of the city of Babylon. It is natural to imagine that ſervitude muſt be very irkſome to a people who, like the Babylonians, had ſo long formed the moſt powerful monarchy at that time exiſting in the world; but, till the death of Cambyſes occaſioned confuſion and diſſenſion among the Perſians, they ſaw no proſpect of ſhaking off a yoke which they impatiently bore; but, conceiving hopes from that event, they determined to make at leaſt a ſtruggle for their liberty: they, however, did not act with that imprudent precipitation, with which people are too apt to purſue what they ardently

dently deſire; but during the reign of Smerdis, and the four firſt years of Darius, employed themſelves in accumulating great ſtore of proviſions, and all things neceſſary to enable them to withſtand a long ſiege, and to annoy the beſiegers; but after ſix years ſpent in theſe preparations, ſtill fearing that their precautions might prove inſufficient, they came to the horrible reſolution of putting to death all who, either on account of their ſex, their infancy, their too advanced age, or other infirmities, being incapable of contributing to the defence of the city, might, by a quicker conſumption of proviſions, reduce them the ſooner to ſurrender.

Having executed this cruel reſolution, leaving to each man only one wife and a maid-ſervant to perform the buſineſs of his family, they declared, in the beginning of the fifth year of Darius's reign, their determination to renounce all ſubjection to the Perſians. Darius aſſembled a powerful army, and, as the Babylonians had foreſeen, laid ſiege to Babylon; but the city was ſo ſtrongly fortified, and ſo plentifully provided with all neceſſaries, that after inveſting it for eighteen months, repulſed in all his attacks, and diſappointed in every ſtratagem, he began to be diſcouraged from purſuing the enterprize. While he was reſolving in his mind what courſe to purſue, Zopyrus, one of the prin-

cipal noblemen of his court, entered his chamber covered with blood, his noſe and ears cut off, and his body mangled in a moſt cruel manner.

Darius, ſhocked at ſo dreadful a ſpectacle, ſtarted from his throne, crying out, Who is it, Zopyrus, that has dared to treat you in this manner? To your charge, O king, replied Zopyrus, I muſt lay theſe bleeding wounds; to my zeal for your ſervice, they are ſolely owing. Liſtening only to that, I have thus mutilated myſelf in order to gain the confidence of the Babylonians, to whom I intend to fly in this condition, as the victim of your wrath, and by that means obtain an opportunity of delivering the city into your hands, I concealed my purpoſe, till I had executed the moſt dreadful part of it, as I knew your generous nature would not have conſented to the means I have taken.

Darius liſtened to him with admiration, gratitude, and horror; they ſettled together the plan of their future proceedings; and Zopyrus having taken leave of the king, preſented himſelf before the gates of the city, in this bleeding condition. He ſoon prevailed with the guard to conduct him to the governor, who beheld his wounds as ſuch indiſputable evidences of the truth of his plauſible tale, that he was eaſily perſuaded to believe, they were the conſequences of Darius's reſentment

reſentment againſt him; for having adviſed the raiſing a ſiege wherein he had ſo little proſpect of ſucceſs; and as Zopyrus (as the governor ſuppoſed) animated with rage and the deſire of revenge, and well acquainted with all the deſigns of their adverſaries, muſt prove a moſt uſeful aſſiſtant, he readily gave him the command of as large a body of troops as he thought proper to require. With theſe he made three different ſallies, wherein he ſlew ſeven thouſand Perſians; Darius, like moſt other heroes, valuing the blood of his ſoldiers at ſo low a rate, that he thought it worth while to ſacrifice ſeven thouſand men, to confirm the confidence which, for the ſucceſs of his purpoſe, it was neceſſary the Babylonians ſhould place in Zopyrus. This cruel means proved effectual. Delighted with Zopyrus's ſucceſs, they gave him the command of all their forces, and rruſted to him the care of their walls: of this truſt he ſoon made the uſe for which he had endeavoured to obtain it; and admitting Darius, and a conſiderable part of his army, into the town, gave into his power an acquiſition, which he could no otherwiſe have gained.

Darius ſettled on Zopyrus the whole revenue of that opulent city, and never could behold him without grief; often ſaying, that he would with pleaſure ſacrifice an hundred

Babylons to reſtore him to what he was, before he had ſo cruelly treated himſelf. Mrs. Wheatley obſerved, that Zopyrus's conduct rather excited wonder than approbation. "If, "ſaid ſhe, he were actuated only by the de- "ſire of ſerving his king, we muſt admire "the warmth of his attachment, without "thoroughly juſtifying the method in which "he ſhewed it; for whatever ſtratagems "heroes may allow, morality will not war- "rant ſo flagrant a deceit. If ambition "were his motive, the fact is leſs extraor- "dinary. Though his ſufferings are more "ſtriking, perhaps they were not greater "than what the ambitious generally under- "go. As theirs are uſually mental, they "are not ſo obvious to others; but could we "ſee how deeply their hearts and minds are "continually wounded, we ſhould perhaps "look on Zopyrus's mangled body as a "ſmall evil. Can thoſe, who ſacrifice their "eaſe, their peace of mind, their reputa- "tions, nay, they very ſouls, to ambition, "be thought to pay a leſs price for their "prince's favour that Zopyrus, who bought "it at the expence of only a few features, "and ſome ſlight wounds? I confeſs, add- "ed ſhe, I have always thought that few "purchaſe greatneſs at ſo moderate a price. "No vice, and ſuch I call ambition, is grati- "fied without pain; fortunate are thoſe,

"whoſe

" whoſe pains are only corporeal! if that
" can be where vice has been gratified.
" Herein Zopyrus excelled; he foreſaw what
" he was to ſuffer, and with courage under-
" took it: the ambitious ſeldom know the
" pains that are prepared for them, till they
" arrive."

HISTORICAL CATECHISM.

LESSON XVII.

Queſt. What name is given in ſcripture to Smerdis?

Anſ. He is there called Artaxerxes.

Q. In what manner did he govern?

A. With ſo much lenity, as probably made the people leſs inclined to examine into the juſtneſs of his title: he granted to all his ſubjects an exemption from taxes and military ſervice for three years; but he was not ſuffered to live till the expiration of that period. The Perſian nobles could not endure the poſſibility of being ſubject to a Median, and therefore were very ſollicitous to diſcover, whether their king was really the ſon of Cyrus, or, as Cambyſes had aſſured them, the brother of the chief Mage.

Q. By what means did they come at the truth?

A. Smerdis had married all the deceaſed king's wives, among whom was Phedyma, the daughter of Otanes, one of the principal noblemen of Perſia: her father applied to her to inform him, whether her huſband was the real Smerdis, but as ſhe had never ſeen Cyrus's ſon of that name, he ordered her, when the king was aſleep, to examine whether he had any ears, whereby ſhe might ſufficiently ſatisfy his doubts, as Cyrus had cauſed the ears of Smerdis, the Mage, to be cut off, a puniſhment for ſome crime he had committed; and ſhould the prince prove to be this man, he was not worthy either of the kingdom or of her. Phedyma, though with fear, obeyed her father, and ſoon after informed him, that the king had no ears.

Q. What was the conſequence of this diſcovery?

A. Otanes communicated it to Gobrias, another Perſian lord, and they, aſſociating five more, among whom was Darius Hyſtaſpes, agreed to take the very firſt opportunity of killing the uſurper. Before they could put this deſign in execution, the king having got ſome information of the ſuſpicions the Perſians entertained of his not being the real Smerdis, by the advice of his brother Patizithes, he obtained a promiſe from Prexaſpes, that he would declare aloud from one of the towers of the palace, to the people who,

who, for that purpoſe, were aſſembled beneath, that the king was indeed the ſon of Cyrus: but Prexaſpes, inſtead of the expected declaration, unfolded the whole deceit, acknowledged his guilt in having ſo long countenanced it, and after having exhorted the Perſians to recover the ſovereignty, and puniſh the uſurper, he threw himſelf head long from the tower, and died on the ſpot.

This tranſaction paſſed, while the conſpirators were going to the palace to execute their purpoſe, and at firſt, they were ſtartled with the incident, but Darius would not ſuffer them to return; they proceeded therefore to the palace, ſlew the guards, and forced their way into the room where the Mages were, one of whom they ſlew; and Gobrias, grappling with Smerdis, called on Darius to give the final blow to the uſurper; but as as the chamber was dark, Darius feared to ſtrike, leſt he ſhould wound his friend. Gobrias deſired him not to think of his ſafety, but to kill the enemy, though the blow might prove fatal to both. Darius obeyed, and by good fortune ſlew only Smerdis. When the Perſians learnt from the conſpirators the truth of the affair, they were ſo enraged againſt the Mage, that they killed them all; and ever after, the anniverſary of that day was celebrated with great ſolemnity.

HISTORICAL CATECHISM.

LESSON XVIII.

Queſt. In what manner was the government ſettled after this event?

Anſ. After the death of Smerdis, the conſpirators could not immediately agree on the form of government that was moſt eligible; but Darius brought them all to conſent, that a monarchy ſhould be eſtabliſhed; and as they had the beſt title to that throne, which owed its vacancy to them, they agreed to refer to the gods the choice of a ſovereign from among their number; and as the ſun was the deity they principally adored, they appointed to meet on horſeback in a particular part of the city, the next morning, by the riſing of the ſun; and that he ſhould reign whoſe horſe firſt neighed.

They all met accordingly, and moſt of them with full faith in, and determined ſubmiſſion to the will of the ſun; but Darius's groom, not chuſing that his maſter's chance ſhould depend on ſo uncertain a deciſion, contrived, by a ſtratagem, to make Darius's horſe firſt give this token, as they eſteemed it of the ſun's peculiar approbation; and in conſequence of his horſes's neighing, he was immediately

immediately acknowledged king. Darius divided his kingdom into twenty provinces, appointing a governor to each, and obliging every province to pay him a moderate annual tribute, except Perſia, which he left free from any taxes.

Q. What was then the extent of the Perſian empire?

A. All that part of Aſia, which now belongs to the Perſian and Turks; in Africa, Egypt, part of Nubia, and the coaſts of the Mediterranean, as far as the kingdom of Barca; and, in Europe, part of Thrace and Macedonia was then ſubject to Perſia: but ſome of the ſtates, comprehended in this great extent of territory, enjoyed their own form of government, only paying a moderate, tribute as an acknowledgment of the Perſian ſovereignty.

Q. In what manner did Darius treat the Jews?

A. Cambyſes and Smerdis, during their reigns, had put a ſtop to the building of the temple at Jeruſalem; but in the ſecond year of Darius's reign, the Jews, through the exhortation of the prophet Haggai, reſumed their work; and when Darius found that they had received permiſſion from Cyrus to reedify their temple, he ordered, that every kind of aſſiſtance ſhould be given them for the proſecution of their underſtanding. This command

command was obeyed, and the Jews were reſtored to their former flouriſhing condition.

Q. What is the next action of conſequence recorded of Darius?

A. The Babylonians, growing weary of their ſubjection to the Perſians, who had made Suſa the imperial ſeat of their empire, revolted from Darius, who, drawing together all his forces laid ſiege to Babylon, and by the ſtratagem of Zopyrus took the city, and reduced the Babylonians to obedience.

Q. In what manner did he treat the inhabitants of Babylon?

A. He put to death about three thouſand of the moſt guilty, and pardoned the reſt. He ſent them fifty thouſand women from the neighbouring provinces, to ſupply the places of thoſe they had ſlain.

GEOGRAPHICAL CATECHISM.

LESSON V.

Queſt. Which are the twelve points?

Anſ. The poles of the earth (or of the equator) are two of the points: the zenith and nadir are two more; the cardinal points of ſouth, north, eaſt and weſt, are four,

four; the two ſolſtices and the two equinoxes compleat the twelve.

Q. What do you mean by the zenith?

A. The point directly over our heads.

Q. What by the nadir?

A. The point directly under our feet.

Q. Are there any diviſions of the cardinal points?

A. Yes; for the uſe of navigation, each point is divided into eight, which are called rhumbs, together making thirty-two; theſe are marked on the outward circle of the wooden horizon which encircles the globe.

Q. Which are the ſolſtices?

A. The ſolſtitial points are, where the ecliptic firſt touches the tropics. The ſummer ſolſtice is on the 21ſt of June, for then the ecliptic touches the tropic of Cancer; the winter ſolſtice is on the 21ſt of December, the ecliptic then touching the tropic of Capricorn.

Q. When are the equinoxes?

A. When the ecliptic or equinoxial line croſſes the equator: the vernal equinox is on the twentieth of March, the ecliptic cutting the equator at the ſign Aries; the autumnal equinox is on the twenty-third of September, the ecliptic croſſing the equator at the ſign Libra.

Q. What do you mean by the latitude of a place?

A. By the latitude of a place we mean its diſtance from the equator; and it is ſaid to have ſouth or north latitude, according to its lying between the equator and the ſouth pole, or between the equator and the north pole.

Q. What do you mean by the longitude?

A. By the longitude of a place, we mean its diſtance from the firſt meridian.

Q. How do you compute the latitude?

A. On the brazen meridian, which is marked with degrees for that purpoſe. On the northern hemiſphere we begin from the equator, and reckon towards the arctic or north pole, but on the ſouthern hemiſphere we begin at the antarctic or ſouth pole, and compute towards the equator.

Q. How do you compute the longitude?

A. On the equator, generally towards the eaſt, that circle being marked with degrees like the meridian.

Q. How is this performed in maps of particular countries, where theſe lines do not appear?

A. In maps, the degrees of latitude are marked on the ſide, and the degrees of longitude on the top and bottom.

You tell me, my dear Mamma, that you are curious to ſee a ſpecimen of the catechiſm I mentioned ſoon after my arrival here, as compoſed for the peculiar uſe of this ſchool.

ſchool. I think I uſed a wrong term, I might more properly have called it a dialogue. We are not required to get any of it by heart; for Mrs. Wheatley ſays, ſhe thinks facts only ſhould be learnt by rote; and when, on the contrary, that practice is applied to matters of reaſon, the ſenſe is droped, and all reflection is ſuſpended, while the learner is endeavouring to charge her memory with the words. The method uſed, therefore, in regard to the dialogue in queſtion, is this: it is divided into ſeparate portions, one of which is read every day for a week, in this manner. The ſcholars are divided into ſix pairs, and at different hours each pair read it together; the firſt three days one of each couple reads the governeſs's part, the other the ſcholars, then they exchange, and for the laſt three days ſhe, who before read the governeſs's part, takes the ſcholars, her companion then taking the governeſs's; thus, each becomes equally acquainted with the whole. This alternate way of reading amuſes us by its novelty, and keeps the mind and attention engaged. I believe all young perſons find this effect from dialogue in general, but I imagine ſtill more, when read in this manner; and we muſt be very ſtupid, if the doctrine we thus repeat for a week together, is not ſtrongly imprinted on our minds, without any kind of labour accompanying

panying it. On my mentioning your curioſity to Mrs. Wheatleys, they ſaid it was ſo juſt and proper, that a parent ſhould be fully acquainted with the principles they endeavour to inſtil into her daughter's mind, that they would give me a copy to ſend you. I ſhall tranſmit a portion every week as we learn it.

DIALOGUE ON RELIGION.

Governeſs. You ſeem reading with great attention, my dear. Pray what is your ſtudy?

Scholar. I have been reading the ſix firſt chapters of Geneſis; and I believe, Madam, it is impoſſible not to attend cloſely to them.

Gov. Why ſo?

Sch. There is ſomething ſo great and awful in the thought of a Power, at whoſe command every thing roſe into being, that I ſhould think no one could peruſe the account of the creation of the world, without being filled with amazement.

Gov. Indeed, I think, it is impoſſible. How great muſt that Power be, which could create this world, and all that it contains; — the firmament, and all the ſtars therein, with only that one command, "let them be?" All nature knew the voice of its God; inanimate matter ſeemed to obey Him. —

What

What a leſſon is this to us? and can we, who are endowed with reaſon and underſtanding, forbear, when thus inſtructed, to apply all our faculties to his ſervice; and endeavour, in every particular, to obey his commands?

Gov. But was God's power the only attribute ſhewn in the creation?

Sch. No, ſurely;—we cannot behold the excellence of what his power produced, without admiring his wiſdom?

Gov. His wiſdom, indeed, we muſt admire with reverence, though the narrowneſs of our capacities renders us but very inadequate judges of it. To perceive it in its true extent requires an equality of wiſdom; but as far as our circumſcribed underſtanings can reach, we may perceive it to be amazing: and this is ſufficient to aſſure us, that what we cannot comprehend ſprings from the ſame ſource, exceeding only in degree; and therefore beyond the diſcovery of our ſhort-ſighted intellects.

Sch. I think the goodneſs of God is not leſs manifeſt in the creation. How many bleſſings has he not given us?

Gov. This indeed is the attribute on which our minds ought chiefly to dwell. His power, his wiſdom, muſt excite our admiration and our reverence; but it is his goodneſs that will inſpire us with love; and from love the trueſt obedience will flow. If we

once

once as we ought, to obey will be our greateſt joy. God's goodneſs, as you ſay, my dear, does indeed appear eminently in the formation of the world. There are very few things which, if received as they ought, would not be a bleſſing to us: all the beauties of nature would furniſh us with the moſt delicate pleaſures; pleaſures unmixed with, and unſucceeded by pain, if our minds were in that happy ſtate, which beſt qualifies us for receiving them;—free from fancied evils, or imaginary delights, which alike render us dead to the moſt rational enjoyments.

Sch. I have often, Madam, experienced the truth of what you ſay; I am naturally fond of fine proſpects, elegant gardens, and beautiful flowers; but when my expectation of the pleaſure I ſhall receive at ſome public amuſement is raiſed to a certain height, I am blind to all the beauties I before admired.

Gov. Has your expectation been anſwered when the time of amuſement arrived?

Sch. Very ſeldom;—I have always been diſappointed of ſome part of the pleaſure I expected. I find, likewiſe, that vexation will rob me of my taſte for rural amuſements, as much as will the hope of greater pleaſure. When any thing happens to vex me, the country is no longer beautiful, the ſinging of birds is diſcord to my ears, and I can receive

ceive no ſatisfaction from the fineſt fragrance which nature can diffuſe.

Gov. But this is not the fault of nature, its beauties are equally charming, its perfumes as fine, its muſic as melodious, as if you reliſhed them always the ſame; — ever delightful; the fault is in ourſelves when we do not taſte its charms. We have ſenſes given us as powers for various pleaſures, and every thing provided that can afford them delight; —but were the bleſſings leſs conſtant, we ſhould be more ſenſible of them; — becauſe nature never witholds her hand, we grow to neglect her gifts.

Sch. It is very true: I find ſometimes, for many days together, I never once reflect that all the hours of my life are filled with bleſſings, or think from whom they all flow.

Gov. It is a great misfortune to loſe that pleaſing recollection, ſince by that we firſt know the goodneſs of our Maker, and learn to depend on the mercy of him, whoſe power and love are equally boundleſs. Thus we are taught, that nothing but bleſſings are ſent by him, and that even ſickneſs, and what the world calls misfortunes, are meant as mercies to us, —often much the greateſt we can receive. But, extenſive as are the benefits at which we have hinted, ſtill how ſmall, how poor, are they all, when compared to that amazing

amazing gift, eternal happineſs, which unbounded love has offered us?

Sch. But that is not a general bleſſing; as we have too much reaſon to believe, great numbers do not attain it.

Gov. The mercy is univerſal; the partial uſe of it, is to be charged on ourſelves only. The Almighty has offered it to all; and at how great a price purchaſed it for all? If we will not accept it, the folly is our own; and on our heads will juſtly fall the puniſhment. Suppoſe, my dear, ſome great monarch was to offer you and your ſiſter each a noble principality at an hundred miles diſtance, with only this condition, that you ſhould travel the direct road thither: — for to acknowledge him for, and love him as your benefactor, muſt appear unavoidable, therefore an uſeleſs condition; ſhould you not have equal reaſon to admire the beneficence of this prince, ſo bountiful and ſo impartial; alike generous to both? We will ſuppoſe you both ſet out towards your principality; your ſiſter travels in the road to which ſhe is directed, ſhe ſometimes has a laborious hill to climb, at others a frightful ſteep to deſcend; in ſome places her path is a little rough and uneaſy, ſometimes the clouds gather, and ſeem to portend a ſtorm, againſt which ſhe ſees no ſhelter without deviating from her path; but, mindful of the direction ſhe received, her perſeverance

perſeverence conquers the difficulties; her unſhaken confidence in her benefactor ſupports her againſt the dangers that lie in her way; and with gradual progreſs, and ſteady pace, ſhe proceeds, till ſhe arrives at her promiſed poſſeſſion, where ſhe finds a happineſs beyond her hopes; becauſe, till inſtructed by the ſight of all the bleſſings that dwell there, ſhe could form no adequate idea of them. You ſet out with the ſame promiſe, the ſame proſpect, as ſhe did;—but, diſcouraged at the firſt difficulty you meet, you leave the road for a flowery valley which lies within your view; then, tempted by ſome fruits which wear a fair appearance, you wander ſtill farther from your road; and though your frequently find, that what ſeemed delightful at a diſtance, loſes all its charms on a nearer inſpection, yet, ſtill deceived by glaring proſpects and fallacious appearances, you rove on as your captivated ſenſes or caprice ſuggeſt imaginary pleaſures; you continue the purſuit, till a ſtrong diſguſt leads you perhaps to attempt a return into the right path; but before you have made much progreſs, ſome inticements tempt you to deviate again from your proper courſe; new purſuits and new diſappointments ariſe; every one leads you ſtill farther from the bleſſing offered, and you at laſt perceive yourſelf in a dark and lonely valley. From this place you can diſ-

cover

cover no exit; harraſſed with fatigue, beaten by ſtorms, ſurrounded with dangers on every ſide, and your mind tormented with terrors, you find you muſt here live confined to horror and deſpair. Wretched, certainly, would he your ſituation, and widely different from your ſiſter's; but yet, could you accuſe the monarch of partiality, or think him leſs merciful, becauſe you are wretched?

Sch. I think not; but indeed, Madam, you have terrified me, by uſing my name in ſo dreadful a ſtory.

Gov. You need not be alarmed, my dear, for I dare ſay, you will take care never to realize my fable. It wants no explanation, I ſuppoſe.

Sch. No, Madam; is it eaſy to perceive that, under my poor name, you have pictured licentiouſneſs and folly, under my ſiſter's virtue and religion.—One you have conducted to heaven; the other to the vale of miſery and woe, as the natural place, to which they muſt reſpectively lead. But I have often wondered, how man made ſuch progreſs in wickedneſs. When he was firſt created, his Maker, I ſuppoſe, included him when he ſaid, all was good; and yet, in how very ſhort a time the worſt of crime were practiſed among men!

Gov. A longer experience of mankind will leſſen your wonder at this particular: it will

teach

teach you how faſt vice will grow on indulgence, and how one crime will croud on the heels of another. No one vice remains long ſingle; it will ever attract company of the ſame kind; a little encouragment turns a ſmall frailty into wickedneſs. Adam's ſin began great, for diſobedience to our Maker, were the circumſtance the ſmalleſt imagination can invent, muſt be a great crime. When he had learnt to indulge his ſenſes,—and to neglect the cultivation of that divine temper of mind, in which he was created, his thoughts and deſires all took a new bent; ſenſe ſtifled reaſon; his mind grew depraved; and all the perfection, in which he was created, diſappeared. His poſterity were the children of debaſed nature; they inherited his depravity; and bad example did its part, in increaſing the corruption of every ſucceeding generation. The quick growth of vice ſhould teach us to watch carefully and early over every bad habit, which may be eradicated at firſt, but if ſuffered to grow, till it has ſhed its ſeed abroad in our hearts, will prove almoſt unconquerable.

This was the portion we read laſt week. Mrs. Wheatley ſays, it will give her great pleaſure to hear you approve it. To know you do ſo, will be a great ſatisfaction and encouragement to, my dear Mamma, your moſt dutiful and affectionate daughter,

MARIA MILTON.

LET-

LETTER XII.

My dear Mamma,

I Am much obliged to my aunt Ann for the fear, you ſay ſhe is under, leſt too much application ſhould hurt my health. I believe her fears are vain, as Mrs. Wheatleys contrive to make amuſement accompany inſtruction; and while the mind is entertained, and the ſpirits rather refreſhed than wearied, I imagine no ill conſequences can ariſe from application. But that her fears are groundleſs, does not make me the leſs obliged to her for entertaining them; on the contrary, I believe I ought to think myſelf the more ſo; for the leſs reaſon there is in the caſe, the more affection has to do in it. By what I have felt at different times in myſelf, and obſerved in others, the conſtitution more frequently ſuffers by diſſipation than by ſtudy; though I allow an exceſs of it may prove pernicious; moſt people will allow, that ſauntring wearies them more than walking a reaſonable pace. Mrs. Wheatley calls diſſipation the ſauntring of the mind; it damps, ſhe ſays, the mental vigour, ſo neceſſary both for improvement and health; and when we grow languid we ſoon tire, our whole frame ſickens, nature cannot exert her pow-

ers, and inaction of mind or body, is the ſourſe of various evils to both. And indeed, Providence ſeems juſtly to withdraw from us powers which, either we do not uſe at all, or uſe amiſs; thus, both the mind and body are debilitated by remaining totally unexerciſed, or by being overſtrained; but I had better proceed no farther, leſt I get out of my depth, and all my fine reaſoning ſhould be ſhipwrecked: my dear aunt, ſhould ſhe ſee what I have written, will perhaps, with good cauſe, wiſh the child would keep to her proper province, learn as faſt as ſhe can, and leave thoſe, who have learnt all that time and experience could teach them, to aſſume the airs of wiſdom, and preach and deſcant on corporeal and mental powers. I ſtand reproved, even on the ſuppoſition of her cenſure, and will turn my pen from my own flimſey thoughts to the actions of a mighty king and queen, great in their rank, but more mean in their conduct than the loweſt of the creation. It is ſome ſatisfaction to me, however, as not quite foreign to what I have aſſerted, that had not Xerxes quited the conduct of affairs, and lived in idleneſs at Sardis, after the loſs of the battle of Salamin, the ſeries of crimes, which one of this day's exerciſes relates, might never have been committed. It is as follows:

Xerxes, during his ſtay at Sardis, conceived a violent paſſion for the wife of his brother Maſſiſtus, a prince of great merit, who had ſerved the king with the utmoſt fidelity; but ſhe, being a very virtuous princeſs, and ſincerely loving and eſteeming her huſband, could not be prevailed with on any terms to return the king's paſſion; yet he flattered himſelf, that, by accumulating favours on her and her family, he might at length make an impreſſion on her heart. With this view he married Darius, his eldeſt ſon and ſucceſſor to Artainta, daughter to this princeſs; but finding nothing was capable of corrupting the fidelity of this eſtimable woman, deſpair effected his cure; and his paſſion changed its object from the mother to the daughter, who proved more compliant to the king's love. During the time of this intrigue, Ameſtris, wife to Xerxes, made him a preſent of a magnificent robe, with which he clad himſelf the next time he made a viſit to Artainta. In the exceſs of his fondneſs he offered to grant her whatever ſhe required of him. Artainta, in whom we may reſonably ſuppoſe vanity was the predominant paſſion, aſked for the robe he then wore; and Xerxes, though reluctantly, was obliged, according to his promiſe, to give it to her, who immediately

mediately put it on, and afterwards wore it in public, as a trophy,

Ameſtris's ſuſpicions being by this means fully confirmed, ſhe determined to let her vengeance fall on the unhappy mother of Artainta, whom ſhe unjuſtly ſuſpected of having favoured the king's paſſion for her daughter; however, ſhe ſtifled her reſentment till the celebration of her huſband's approaching birth-day. It was the cuſtom in Perſia for the queen, on that anniverſary, to aſk the king whatever ſhe pleaſed, and he was obliged to grant the requeſt. Accordingly, when the time came, the queen deſired the king to deliver his brother's wife into her hands. Xerxes foreſeeing the conſequences of this demand, endeavoured to diſſuade her from inſiſting upon it; but finding her obſtinate, he weakly complied, thinking himſelf bound by cuſtom to indulge her on that occaſion: in conſequence of which, the lady was ſeized and delivered to Ameſtris, who cauſed her breaſts, tongue, ears, noſe, and lips to be cut off; ordered them to be given to the dogs in the preſence of this unhappy princeſs; and afterwards ſent her back, in that miſerable condition, to her huſband; who, being ſtruck with horror at ſo deplorable an object, determined to take revenge for the cruel treatment of a wife, whom he tenderly loved. He aſſembled his

family and dependants, and ſet out with great expedition for Bactriana, of which he was governor, in order to raiſe an army, and make war on the king.

Xerxes, hearing of his ſudden departure, did not doubt his intention, and therefore ſent after him a detachment of horſe, which overtook him, and deſtroyed him and his whole family.

HISTORICAL CATECHISM.

LESSON XIX.

Queſt. What was Darius's next expedition?

Anſ. He undertook a war againſt the Scythians, who inhabited the countries lying between the Danube and Tanais; pretending to be inſtigated thereto, by a deſire of revenging the calamities they had brought on Aſia an hundred and twenty years before, when they held it in ſubjection, together with the kingdom of Media, for twenty years.

Q. What manner of people were the Scythians?

A. A hardy, robuſt, temperate, and innocent people; who had no fixed habitations, but moving their families in waggons, changed

changed their abode as the better convenience of their own and cattles ſubſiſtence prompted them; and being ignorant of the luxuries of more poliſhed nations, were likewiſe free from their vices.

Q. What was the ſucceſs of this enterprize?

A. With an army of 700,000 men, he paſſed the Boſphorus on a bridge of boats, and ſubdued all Thrace; from thence he marched into Scythia, where he met with no oppoſition, the Schythians retiring conſtantly before him, thus continually drawing him farther into the country, which they had laid entirely waſte, and filled up all the wells and ſprings. Darius, at length, became ſenſible of his danger, in having penetrated ſo far into a country, with which he was ſo unacquainted, and where he could find nothing to ſupply the neceſſities of his army, when he ſhould have conſumed the proviſions he had brought with him; and, to repair his error, to the beſt of his power, he withdrew from his camp in the middle of the night, as quietly as poſſible; and leaving Megabyzus his general to compleat his conqueſts, he retired to Sardis to refreſh and recruit his forces, which had ſeverely ſuffered by his Scythian expedition.

Q. What progreſs did Megabyzus make after the king's departure?

A. He entirely ſubdued all Thrace.

Q. What was Darius's next exploit?

A. The conqueſt of India, which country he annexed to Perſia.

Q. What more of Darius's actions can you recollect?

A. He ſent an army into Greece to puniſh the revolt of the Ionians, who, joined by the Athenians, had burnt Sardis; but his troops received a conſiderable defeat at Marathon from the Athenians, whoſe general Miltiades, at the head of ten thouſand men, conquered the Perſian army, which conſiſted of a hundred and ten thouſand.

Q. Did Darius long ſurvive this diſgrace?

A. He lived about three years after it; all which time he ſpent in making the moſt formidable preparations for the continuance of the war, but died before he had compleated his purpoſe.

Q. Who ſucceeded Darius?

A. Xerxes, his younger ſon, who was judged his proper heir, becauſe he was born after his father came to the crown; whereas his eldeſt brother Artabatazanes was born while Darius was a private man; Artabatazanes ſubmiting with great generoſity to the deciſion.

Q. When did Xerxes aſcend the throne?

A. Four hundred and eighty-five years before Chriſt.

Q.

Q. What did Xerxes do when he came to the crown?

A. He firſt ſubdued the revolted Egyptians; and then led an army of near three millions againſt Greece. The Athenians and Lacedemonians were almoſt the only ſtates, that had courage to defend themſelves againſt ſo powerful an enemy. Eurybiades, a Lacedemonian, was appointed general.

Q. What ſucceſs had the Perſians?

A. Leonidas, king of Sparta, with three hundred men, oppoſed Xerxes's whole army in their paſſage through the ſtraits of Thermopylæ, a narrow paſs at the foot of mount Oeta, between Theſſaly and Phocis, till Leonidas and his ſmall band of troops were all but one killed, after having ſlain no leſs than twenty thouſand of the enemy. The Athenians abandoned Athens (which the Perſians afterwards burnt,) and all that were capable of hearing arms were put on board their fleet, the reſt ſent to Trezene in Peloponeſus, where they were maintained at the expence of that city.

HISTORICAL CATECHISM.

LESSON XX.

Queſt. What ſucceſs had the Athenian fleet?

Anſ. Themiſtocles had the chief command over it, and obtained a ſignal victory over Xerxes's fleet at Salamin; whereupon the king (who, during the battle, viewed it from an eminence on the ſhore) retired towards Sardis with the utmoſt precipitation; but on his return to the Helleſpont, found the bridge, which he had built for his army to paſs over, broken down by a tempeſt, and he himſelf reduced to paſs in a ſmall boat.

Q. Did Xerxes carry his whole army with him?

A. No; he left 300,000 men under the command of Mardonius, who the next year received a total defeat at Platia, where Ariſtides was general of the Athenians, and Pauſanias of the Lacedemonians; which diſcouraged the Perſians from ever after attempting to paſs the Helleſpont.

Q. Was Xerxes's fleet more ſucceſsful than his army?

A. No; on the day of the victory at Platea, the Perſian fleet was defeated by the Greeks at Mycale, Leotichydes king of Sparta, and Xanthippus the Athenian, being commanders for the Grecians at ſea.

Q. How did Xerxes act upon the double defeat of his forces?

A. When he heard of this ill ſucceſs, he retired with all haſte into Perſia.

Q.

Q. How long did Xerxes live after his return into Perſia?

A. About ſix years; when he was murdered by Artabanus, one of his generals, who likewiſe killed Xerxes's eldeſt ſon; accuſing him of the death of his father, but was himſelf ſlain by Artaxerxes, another ſon of Xerxes's, who ſucceed his father in the empire.

Q. Did Artaxerxes continue the war with Greece.

A. Yes; but with ill ſucceſs, his fleet being defeated at Eurymedon by Cymon, the Athenian commander, who likewiſe routed his land army; and, after a ſiege of three years, took the iſland of Thaſus, and conquered great part of Aſia.

Q. What conſequences followed theſe defeats?

A. Artaxerxes having no longer any hopes of ſucceſs, made peace with the Athenians, on conditions very honourable and advantageous to them.

You tell me, my dear Mamma, that ſome of my friends complain of my remiſſneſs in anſwering their letters; if they ſaw the monſtrous length of thoſe I write to you, they would not wonder at it; indeed, I leave myſelf little time to addreſs any other perſon, and I am indebted to the governeſſes for particular indulgence, or I could not get leiſure, to write ſo much as I do, but they do not

include letters to a parent under the head of trifling, and impertinent correſpondences, a thing they much diſcourage, and are too well convinced how juſtly every attention is your due to abridge me in the liberty of telling my dear Mamma, that I am ever her moſt dutiful daughter,

MARIA MILTON.

LETTER XIII.

My dear Mamma,

I am a preſent inclined to treat as an objection to a quiet and retired life, what I have generally though a recommendation, the quick and ſtrong growth of affection; which certainly a variety of company, a multiplicity of amuſements, and that diſſipation of mind naturally produced thereby, conſiderably obſtruct; but here our thoughts are much confined to each other; we ſoon diſcover every eſtimable quality a perſon poſſeſſes; nothing prevents their merit from making a due impreſſion; and our hearts feel, almoſt as ſoon as our minds diſcern, their virtues. My preſent objection to this quick ſenſibility ariſes from the departure of Miſs James, one of my ſchool-fellows; a young lady of about fourteen years of age; whoſe

ſweetneſs

ſweetneſs of temper, good underſtanding, and amiable conduct, rendered her a very valuable acquaintance. She has been here above four years, and was much concerned at being taken away; indeed, ſo much that I told her, I was ſurprized at her unwillingneſs to return home, where ſhe has a father, and other relations, who it is natural to ſuppoſe ſhe muſt wiſh to ſee. She anſwered, that if I knew the obligations ſhe lay under to Mrs. Wheatleys, I ſhould no longer wonder at the concern with which ſhe left them, for ſhe believed no perſon ever was ſo indebted to others, as I muſt allow if I thought her at all worthy my eſteem; ſince when ſhe came to them, ſhe was an object of contempt and deteſtation, and could be no other to any one who had either truth, honour, or religion in their own breaſts.

I replied, that ſurely ſhe treated herſelf with too much rigour, for as ſhe was ſcarcely ten years old when ſhe came to this ſchool, her faults could not be of ſo black a dye, as to deſerve the cenſure ſhe had paſſed on them.

"I am not fond, ſaid ſhe, of expoſing "myſelf, nor ſhould I chuſe to do ſo to any "one but you, as I know few people are "capable of excuſing paſt errors, or of be-"lieving that great vices can ever be to-"tally eradicated; but I have obſerved the "turn of your mind, and therefore am per-

"ſuaded

" ſuaded, I run no hazard in doing juſtice
" to Mrs. Wheatleys goodneſs, by ſhewing
" my great obligations to her, and her
" daughters.

" The misfortune, to which I attribute
" the errors of my infancy, was the death
" of my mother, before I was a year old.
" I was not, however, deprived of parental
" care, for my father was fond of me, but
" his avocations would not ſuffer him to turn
" nurſe to an infant; therefore, as ſoon as I
" was weaned, he hired a perſon whoſe ſole
" buſineſs was to take care of me, which,
" as far as my bodily welfare was concerned,
" ſhe performed in ſuch a manner as render-
" ed her valuable in his eyes; but the ex-
" treme ſtrictneſs with which ſhe treated
" me, though it had good effects on my
" outward behaviour, had a very pernicious
" one on my mind. By nature extremely
" timorous, I feared her to an exceſs: in
" ſhort, all thoſe to whom I was ſubject,
" were objects of terror to me; my father,
" though of a noble diſpoſition, is paſſion-
" ate; a ſiſter of his, who lived with us,
" not leſs ſo; and although they were both
" fond of me, yet, if I gave any offence, I
" was reproved for it in a manner more
" likely to fright than reform me. Thus
" circumſtanced, I lived under conſtant ter-
" ror and reſtraint; which, unfortunately,

" excited

" excited the compaſſion of the ſervants,
" who took every opportunity of indulging
" me that fell in their way; charging me,
" on all ſuch occaſions, not to tell the little
" gratifications I received from them; the
" houſekeeper particularly crammed me with
" fruit and ſweet-meats, but as exceſſive care
" was taken of my diet, all this was to be a
" ſecret. Slight diſorders, or other acci-
" dents, would frequently awaken ſuſpi-
" cions, and theſe brought on an examina-
" tion, from which I could not eſcape un-
" corrected, but by a ſteady denial of the
" charge; to which every ſervant exhorted
" me. By theſe means I ſoon acquired a
" habit of lying: one lye, like any other ſin,
" draws many after it; but fear made me
" proceed, and heap one upon another with-
" out heſiation; for if I happened to be
" found out, my puniſhment was not more
" ſevere than if I had owned the fact, which
" I found was never looked upon as a proof
" of frankneſs and honeſty, but as a want
" of knowledge how to evade the charge.
" From lying for myſelf, I learnt to lye for
" the ſervants; and the practice became ſo
" habitual, that at laſt I could ſcarcely ſpeak
" truth on any ſubject. This excited a
" general deteſtation againſt me; not a
" word I ſaid was believed, which I confeſs
" was juſt enough, for who can know when

" to

" to credit a lyar? but no proper means
" were taken to cure me. I ſometimes
" endeavoured to refrain from all untruths,
" but it was ineffectual, whatever aſſurances
" I gave of my ſincerity, the fact was never
" examined, but I was condemned as a per-
" ſon whom no one could believe. When
" I found that every endeavour to recover
" my credit proved vain, I entirely laid a-
" ſide all regard for truth, and having more
" imagination than was common at my age,
" I addicted myſelf to lies of invention,
" which, rendering me more amuſing, I
" gained ſome favour by diverting my fa-
" ther and aunt, who by ſhewing they were
" entertained, encouraged me in the prac-
" tice, till I became the moſt compleat lyar;
" and all the time a moſt miſerable being;
" for except the few moments wherein I am-
" uſed, I ſaw myſelf deſpiſed by the whole
" family, and deprived of all hope of gain-
" ing their good opinion. Young as I was,
" the ſituation into which I had reduced
" myſelf, coſt me many tears, when by
" withdrawing myſelf from obſervation, I
" could indulge my reflexions. If I had
" had caurage and candour ſufficient to have
" laid open the diſtreſſed ſtate of my mind
" to my father or my aunt, perhaps it might
" have obtained from them ſome encou-
" ragement to endeavour at a conqueſt over

" this

" this dreadful propenſity; but I ſtood in
" too much awe to aſk their aſſiſtance, and
" the fear of anger, which was always pre-
" ſent with me, operated ſo immediately,
" that the attempt to avoid it by falſhood,
" came more quickly than reflexion; and,
" notwithſtanding the conſtant diſtruſt they
" had of me, I frequently thereby eſcaped
" correction for ſmall faults by commiting
" a much greater.

" In this manner I lived till I was near
" ten years old, and ſhould, I fear, have on-
" ly been more confirmed in my deteſtable
" practice by age, had it not occaſioned an
" accident which filled me with inexpreſſi-
" ble terrors. Though my character was
" ſo well known, that few mothers would
" ſuffer their daughters to keep company
" with me, and none but in their preſence,
" I had been one day on a viſit to a young
" lady within a quarter of a mile of our
" houſe; and a footboy, my father kept,
" of about twelve years old, was ſent to
" fetch me home; my governeſs being con-
" fined with a bad cold. When my guide
" and I got into our own garden, we began
" to play, as was natural enough to our
" ages; and endeavouring to catch him, I
" took the ſhorteſt way, and ran croſs a bed
" of extreme fine flowers, juſt beginning to
" blow, which my father, who is a great
" floriſt,

" floriſt, valued exceedingly, and watched
" with as much care and ſollicitude as the
" tendereſt parent could ſhew for a child.
" He had procured the roots from Holland
" with no ſmall difficulty, and as far as
" could then be ſeen, they promiſed to an-
" ſwer his expectations; but their extra-
" ordinary merits had made ſo little impreſ-
" ſion on me, that I trod them down with
" as little ceremony as if they had been the
" vileſt weeds, and levelled moſt of them
" with the ground.

" We had ſcarcely got into the houſe,
" when my father went into the garden to
" make his evening viſit to his nurſery, and
" cover the moſt tender plants from the
" evening air. You may imagine his ſur-
" prize was great at ſeeing much the largeſt
" part of them broken from their ſtalks,
" lying ſcattered on the ground. He im-
" mediately returned in the moſt violent paſ-
" ſion imaginable, and calling me and the
" footboy, enquired which of us had made
" that havock; for he knew we had paſſed
" that way. The rage he was in, terrified
" me to ſo great a degree, that, to ſave my-
" ſelf, I accuſed the poor boy, whereupon
" he gave him two or three blows with a
" cane he had in his hand, and would have
" given him more if the poor wretch had
" not fainted away. This ſtopped him;

" and

" and on examination it appeared that he
" had broken the boy's arm, a circumſtance
" which diſpelled his anger, but filled me
" with remorſe. All proper care was taken
" of him, but the fracture was a bad one,
" and a fever enſued which brought his life
" in danger. It is impoſſible to imagine
" what I ſuffered, while he lay in this con-
" dition; the fear of being diſcovered, and
" the ſenſe of my wickedneſs, almoſt diſ-
" tracted me; to avoid the firſt, I ſtole in-
" to his room, and kneeling at his bed-ſide
" begged his pardon, and with many tears
" beſeeched him not to tell the injuſtice I
" have done him; promiſing that, if ever it
" was in my power, I would make him all
" poſſible reparation for what he ſuffered.
" The poor boy aſſured me he would not
" deny a fact, for which he had already re-
" ceived all the puniſhment his maſter, who
" was naturally humane, though paſſionate,
" would ever inflict; a promiſe which eaſed
" my fears, but wounded my heart ſtill
" deeper; and if his fever had continued
" many days longer, I think verily I could
" not have ſurvived it. Not that I became
" eaſy on the fair appearances of his re-
" covery; the notion of having ſo narrow-
" ly eſcaped being the occaſion of a murder
" had made ſo deep an impreſſion on my
" mind, that I was full of terrors; I ſaw the

" fatal

" fatal conſequence of lying in the moſt
" dreadful light, and yet was ſenſible, that
" while I lived at home the ſame timerouſ-
" neſs, which had firſt occaſioned, would
" have continued me in it. Thus diſtreſſ-
" ed, I took an odd reſolution for a child
" of my age; I went to my father and aunt,
" and with the extremeſt earneſtneſs, and a
" flood of tears, beſeeched them to ſend me
" to a boarding-ſchool, or I muſt all my
" life be the moſt miſerable wretch on earth,
" for I could not bear to live where I was
" deſpiſed; and when I ſpoke truth no one
" would believe me. My father at the time
" made me no anſwer, but the next day told
" me he had conſidered of my requeſt, and
" would comply with it. The character
" of Mrs. Wheatleys directed his choice, and
" I was very ſoon ſent hither. How great
" was the comfort I found in their gentle-
" neſs and good humour. My great fault
" had been mentioned to them, and they
" ſoon gained my confidence ſo entirely,
" that I acknowledged it in much ſtronger
" terms than had been reported; and even
" acquainted them with the misfortune which
" had rendered home ſome odious to me.
" Mrs. Wheatley never attempted to ex-
" tenuate my crime, but encouraged my re-
" pentance, and ſtrengthened my reſolu-
" tions of amendment; which ſhe could not

" do

" do more efficaciouſly than by promiſing
" never to be angry with me for any thing
" but a lye. She prevailed with me to write
" to my father a full confeſſion of having
" been guilty of the fault, for which the
" poor boy had ſuffered, leſt after his re-
" covery, he ſhould turn him away; repre-
" ſenting likewiſe, that it was the only re-
" paration I could for many years make him,
" and perhaps the greateſt that would be in
" my power, as my father's humanity would
" induce him to be particularly kind to the
" lad, as ſome amends for the ſevere puniſh-
" ment he had unjuſtly inflicted. I had
" now no temptation to have recourſe to
" falſhood; but yet, notwithſtanding the
" ſenſe I had of my wickedneſs, it was grown
" ſo habitual to me, that I do not believe
" I ſhould ever have been quite cured of it,
" if Mrs. Wheatleys had not been continual-
" ly on their guard, and checked me when-
" ever I ſwerved in the moſt minute degree
" from truth, even on the moſt trifling occa-
" ſion; a care which could not fail of being
" effectual, eſpecially as they recommended
" to me, to make the conqueſt over this
" vice one of the articles of my daily prayers.
" I am ſure, continued Miſs James, you
" will now allow that I did not expreſs my
" obligation to theſe ladies in too ſtrong
" terms. May I ever retain a juſt ſenſe of
" it

" it, though I perhaps ſhall never have any
" means of ſhewing my gratitude but my
" prayers, which will ever be due to them,
" without whoſe kind care and inſtructions
" I could never have dared to pray at all,
" for how can a lyar preſume to addreſs the
" fountain of truth! As for the poor boy I
" injured, I hope ſoon to find the means
" of making him ſome recompence, though
" my father's kindneſs has left him little
" occaſion for my ſervices."

Miſs James's account of herſelf touched me extremely; I felt that in her ſituation I might have been as criminal; for her faults ſeems to have ariſen more from the diſpoſitions of thoſe under whoſe authority ſhe was placed, than from her own. How little did I deſerve the commendation ſo often given me for my truth and ſincerity! I had no temptation to falſhood: had every child ſuch parents, I imagine, there would be few lyars. Every day ſhews me my peculiar felicity: for in moſt the errors I ſee the parents ſeem full as much in fault as the children. It requires a ſpirit almoſt as great as is neceſſary to determine us to undergo martyrdom, to enable a child to adhere ſtrictly to truth who has ſevere and paſſionate parents. Mr. James could not have made a more judicious choice than by ſending his daughter to this ſchool; for Mrs. Wheatleys are ſo attentive to this

particular,

particular, that they will not ſuffer even the leaſt exaggeration; they firſt ſhew us the folly of it, and then repreſent how blameable it is to ſwerve from truth in the ſmalleſt degree, as it not only familiarizes the mind to falſhood, but teaches us to ſee every thing in a falſe light. They tell us, that people regulate their judgment ſo much more by words than the reality of things; that, from accuſtoming themſelves to ſpeak in too ſtrong terms, they learn to look upon ſmall inconveniences as great evils, and trifling amuſements as eſſential pleaſures. "Thus "a lady, ſay they, after ſhe has repeated "ſeveral times, that *ſhe ſhall dye*, if ſhe does "not attend ſome approaching entertain-"ment, begins to think that life would in "reality be ſcarcely ſupportable without it; "her eagerneſs riſes in proportion to her "expreſſion, and words, which ſhould only "be the ſervants of the mind, become its "maſter, and regulate all its ſenſations. "Exaggeration has the ſame conſequences "in ſickneſs as in pleaſures. A perſon who "would be aſhamed not to ſupport common "pains with patience, by calling them an "*agony*, (or any other term as ſtrong) think "impatience may he allowed them; and, "by that impatience, greatly increaſe the "evil." Mrs. Wheatleys never ſuffer an exaggerating expreſſion to paſs unreproved,

but

but make us ſpeak in terms ſtrictly adequate to the ſubject. We muſt not talk of an *immenſe* tea-cup, nor a *prodigious* fly; we are not allowed to *deteſt* a daffodil, *doat* on a roſe, or *adore* a honey ſuckle; a point, which I have heard them ſay, they have ſometimes more difficultly gained, than things that appear far more material. To prevent as much as poſſible the temptations to exaggerate, we are not permitted to deal in wonders or compariſons; we muſt not declare ourſelves either as *hot as fire*, or *as cold as ice*; nor are we ſuffered to uſe any of thoſe bombaſt comparatives, which in many people clog almoſt every ſentence they ſpeak with a lye. Although your reproofs on the occaſion had in great meaſure repreſſed this exaggerating ſpirit in me, yet I was at firſt frequently caught offending in this particular; and I confeſs for ſome time, converſation appeared to me very inſipid, without thoſe enlivening compariſons which give ſuch an air of importance to every trifle: colours ſeemed to fade before my eyes, when I no longer heard of any things being *as red as ſcarlet*, as *black as ink*, as *white as ſnow*, &c. and by an excluſion of the words *immenſe* and *exceſſive*, nothing became worth deſcription: but time has reconciled me to this moderation of terms, which is neceſſarily followed by a gentleneſs of manner, for vehemence cannot

ſubſiſt without exaggeration and bombaſt; our language muſt give importance to trifles, or we ſhould be aſhamed to ſhew ourſelves eager about them. But to my leſſons.

HISTORICAL CATECHISM.

LESSON XXI.

Queſt. What ſhare had the Egyptians in the war between Athens and Perſia?

Anſ. They were perſuaded by the Athenians to rebel againſt the Perſians; and aſſiſted them in defeating Achmænes, the Perſian general; but the Perſians afterwards revenged themſelves on the Athenians, who ſuffered very much in the remainder of the war; and Inarus, prince of the Libians, was reduced to ſubmit, Megabyzus, the Perſian general, having promiſed him and the remainder of his troops their lives.

Q. Was this promiſe kept?

A. No; Artaxerxes, after having for five years withſtood his mother's importunity, at laſt delivered Inarus and his troops up into her hands, who crucified Inarus, and beheaded the reſt; which ſo offended Megabyzus, that he revolted; and the king, not able to reduce him by force, was obliged to gain

gain him by great promiſes. He afterwards admited him to his confidence.

Q. Did he retain it long?

A. He did; till one day in hunting, ſeeing the king in danger, he killed the lion; which being contrary to a Perſian law, forbiding any one to ſtrike, till after the king had wounded the beaſt, he was baniſhed, although by this ſuppoſed crime he had ſaved the king's life, but was after a ſhort time again reſtored to favour.

Q. What benefits did Artaxerxes grant the Jews?

A. He gave Eſdras, and afterwards Nehemiah, leave to rebuild the walls of Jeruſalem, and to carry all the Jews he could find to inhabit it.

Q. When did Artaxerxes die?

A. In the eighth year of the Peloponeſian war, four hundred and twenty-ſix years before Chriſt.

Q. Who ſucceded Artaxerxes?

A. His only ligitimate ſon, Xerxes the ſecond; but before he had reigned two months he was killed by Sogidianus, his half-brother.

Q. Did Sogidianus long poſſeſs the throne?

A. No; his brother Darius, ſir-named Nothus, or the Baſtard, finding his life in danger, raiſed an army, and having got Sogidianus into his hands, cauſed him to be put to death

death in aſhes, which was one of the Perſian methods of puniſhment.

Q. In what manner was it inflicted?

A. One of the largeſt towers being filled to a certain height with aſhes, the criminal was thrown head-long from the top of the tower into them; after which the aſhes were by a wheel turned perpetually round him till he was ſuffocated.

Q. When did Darius die?

A. About 403 years before Chriſt.

Q. Who ſucceeded Darius Nothus?

A. Artaxerxes Mnemon, his eldeſt ſon, contrary to the deſire of Pariſatis his mother, who uſed her utmoſt endeavours to prevail with Darius to appoint Cyrus, his youngeſt ſon, for his ſucceſſor.

Q. What pretence was there for this?

A. Artaxerxes was born before Darius came to the crown, and Cyrus after: this had been thought a ſufficient reaſon for excluding Artabazanes, Xerxes's eldeſt brother, from the throne.

Q. In what manner did Cyrus behave?

A. His exceſſive ambition led him into a deſign of aſſaſſinating his brother; but being diſcovered, Artaxerxes condemned him to die.

Q. Was he executed?

A. No; his mother Pariſatis not only obtained his pardon of Artaxerxes, but pre-

vailed ſo far as to have him reſtored to the government of the Maritime provinces, which he had before enjoyed, with unlimited authority, during his father's life.

LESSON XXII.

Q. In what manner did Cyrus requite this lenity?

A. He rebelled againſt his brother, and drew over to his party 13000 Greeks under the command of Clearchus.

Q. What ſucceſs had his rebellion?

A. After a march of ſix months, he met Artaxerxes at the head of his army near Babylon, and was ſlain in battle, either by his brother, or the people round the king, while the two brothers were engaged in a kind of ſingle combat.

Q. In what manner did Cyrus's courtiers behave?

A. Determined not to outlive him, they all fought round his body till they were ſlain.

Q. How did the Greeks diſtinguiſh themſelves?

A. In the battle they conquered that part of Artaxerxes's army, which was oppoſed to them; but after Cyrus's death were abandoned by all the reſt of the army.

Q.

Q. In what manner did they then defend themſelves?

A. Artaxerxes, finding they were determined rather to die than to ſurrender, thought it prudent to grant them leave to return into Greece; and appointed his general, Tiſſaphernes, to conduct them ſafe.

Q. What number of Greeks then remained?

A. Ten thouſand.

Q. How did Tiſſaphernes execute this charge?

A. Very treacherouſly; he got Clearchus, and four of his chief captains, into his power, and put them to death; but under the conduct of Xenophon, this little army was led ſafely back into Greece, though treated as enemies in every country they paſſed through.

Q. How long had they been abſent?

A. Fifteen months, in continual march.

Q. Who wrote the account of this retreat?

A. Xenophon, and it is called the retreat of the 10000; the moſt famous military expedition in antiquity.

GEOGRAPHICAL CATECHISM.

LESSON VI.

Q. What is meant by the elevation on the pole?

A. The elevation of the pole of any place, is its diſtance above the horizon, meaſured by the degrees on the lower ſide of the meridian, and is always exactly equal to the latitude of that place. As for example, to elevate the pole for the latitude of London, which lies in fifty-one degrees, thirty minutes of north latitude, I muſt raiſe the north pole above the horizon, till the fifty-firſt degree and half on the lower part of the meridian appears juſt above the northern part of the horizon.

Q. What is a direct or right ſphere?

A. When the poles of the globe are in the horizon, and the equator paſſes through the zenith, it is called a direct, or right ſphere, becauſe the equator and horizon cut each other in right, or ſtrait lines. In this poſition the world appears placed to thoſe who live under the equator; to them, day and night are always of an equal length, becauſe the ſun is, throughout the year, twelve hours

hours of every twenty-four above the horizon, conſequently the ſame time below it.

Q. When is their ſummer?

A. When the ſun is in or near either of the equinoctial points, for it is then directly over their heads: of courſe, when the ſun is in or near the ſolſtitial points, it is winter with them; thus they have two of each of theſe ſeaſons in a year.

Q. What is a parallel ſphere?

A. The exact oppoſite to the poſition laſt mentioned: when the equator is in the horizon, and the poles in the zenith and nadir, it is then called a parallel ſphere, becauſe the equator and horizon are parallel lines. If the poles are inhabited, the people there live in a parallel ſphere, and the whole year is with them divided into one day and one night. To thoſe under the north pole it is day while the ſun paſſes from Aries to Libra, as it all that time appears to them above the horizon; the other half of the year, being below the horizon, it is night with them: thoſe under the ſouth pole have their nights and days in the contrary ſeaſons.

Q. What is an oblique ſphere?

A. When the equator cuts the horizon obliquely, or as we may term it, a-ſlant; part of the equator being above, part below the horizon, it is called an oblique ſphere; and this is the caſe in every poſition of the

globe, except thoſe two already mentioned, though they differ in degrees of obliquity, and conſequently vary in the inequality of day and night.

Q. What do geographers mean by the periæci?

A. By the periæci they mean thoſe who live under the ſame degree of latitude, and on the ſame ſide of the equator, but differ in longitude, juſt half the globe: theſe have the ſame ſummer and winter, but when it is mid-day with the one, it is mid-night with the other.

Q. Who have no periæci?

A. Thoſe who inhabit the poles.

Q. What do geographers mean by the antæci?

A. By the antæci are meant thoſe who live under the ſame meridian, and in the ſame degree of latitude, but on the contrary ſides of the equator; their noon and mid-night are at the ſame time, but the length of the day in the one is the meaſure of the night in the other, their winter and ſummer being, at contrary times, according as the ſun is on th: north or ſouth ſide of the equator.

Q. Who have no antæci?

A. Thoſe who live under the equator; being exactly in the place from whence we begin to reckon both north and ſouth.

Q. What is meant by the antipodes?

A.

A. Geographers by the antipodes mean thoſe, who live on the contrary ſides of the globe, and oppoſite hemiſpheres, but at equal diſtance from the equator; ſo that if a line were paſſed from the feet of the one, through the centre of the earth, it would touch the feet of the other.

I will make no uſeleſs additions to this long letter, but conclude with, I hope the unalterable ſentiment of my heart, and what will rule every action of my life, that I am, my dear Mamma, your moſt dutiful and tenderly affectionate daughter,

MARIA MILTON.

LETTER XIV.

My dear Mamma,

I had ſcarcely finiſhed my laſt letter when my preſence was deſired in the parlour, in order to be introduced to miſs Le Maine, a new ſcholar juſt arrived. She is indeed perfectly new, and does not yet appear a worthy ſubſtitute to miſs James, in whoſe place ſhe is admited; but if follies are not more difficult to conquer than vices, the care of the governeſſes may in time improve her. Were ſhe younger the taſk would be more eaſy, but ſhe is above ſixteen years of age.

Mrs. Wheatley had given her word to Mrs. Le Maine, the young lady's aunt, that ſhe ſhould be received on the firſt vacancy, a promiſe ſhe wiſhed herſelf diſcharged from ſoon after ſhe had given it, as Mrs. Le Maine then acquainted her with the reaſons for ſending her niece to ſchool at ſo unuſual an age; which were theſe. Miſs Le Maine, during her mother's life, dwelt conſtantly in London; and at twelve years of age became the companion of her mother's diſſipation. Mrs. Le Maine was always at cards; her daughter therefore was left to regulate her own conduct, and naturally cultivated an intimacy with the gayeſt and giddieſt of the girls, who frequentcd the houſes where ſhe reſorted. In ſuch company ſhe ſoon learnt all the abſurdities and affectation incident to youth and diſſipation; but either from being ſo early reſcued from this way of life, or a greater fund of prudence than her manner denotes, her aunt ſays, ſhe has no indecency of conduct to charge her with. Her mother has been dead about three months, and left miſs with a fortune of 4000*l.* to the care of Mr. Le Maine, her father's brother. This gentleman took her home to his wife, a lady very capable of improving her young charge, but they ſoon found that miſs made greater progreſs in teaching their daughters her various affectations, than they could hope to do

in

in correcting them. This determined them to remove her out of their own houſe, where ſhe could not remain without infecting her couſins with all her follies; and as Mrs. Le Maine was once intimately acquainted with Mrs. Wheatley, ſhe well knew her ſchool was the propereſt place to fix her in. She tells Mrs. Wheatley, that the young lady is good-natured, and ſeems to have no evil in her diſpoſition, but is totally ignorant of religion and all moral virtues; nor has ſhe been able to engage her attention even one moment to any thing ſerious. She was too thoughtleſs to ſuffer much affliction on the death of her mother, though her removal into the country ſo ſoon followed it. That change however wearied her ſo much, that ſhe heard without any concern, though not without much contempt, her uncle's intention of ſending her to a boarding-ſchool; and before ſhe ſet out, endeavoured to divert herſelf and them with repreſenting how ſhe ſhould aſtoniſh the prim miſtreſs and ſtarched ſcholars at a country-ſchool, who ſhe ſuppoſed muſt be entirely unacquainted with the great world. Mrs. Wheatley had ſome uneaſy apprehenſions before her appearance, which miſs has not endeavoured to alleviate. The fears of that good woman are leſt any of her ſcholars ſhould catch ſome of her affectations, or adopt her abſurdities. To ob-

viate as far as ſhe was able this inconvenience, ſhe apprized us before her arrival, that ſhe was a young lady who, having the misfortune to be the only child of a weak mother, had received a very bad education, and by her conduct had diſguſted all her friends; who, unable to bear the mortification of ſeeing a fine young creature render herſelf ridiculous, had removed her out of their ſight till ſhe was cured of her abſurdities. She then repreſented how carefully we ought to avoid learning any of her affectation, as the odiouſneſs of it appears evident, by cauſing her baniſhment from the houſe of very worthy relations. But to prevent us from harbouring any ſuch prejudices as could raiſe a diſlike in us, that ſhe might ſuffer by, Mrs. Wheatley expatiated on the compaſſion ſhe deſerved for her unfortunate manner; obſerved that every one of us, in the ſame caſe, ſhould have been what ſhe is, and therefore, while we were thankful to Providence for having given us more prudent parents, we ought to feel a tender pity for her, and endeavour to improve her, not by finding fault, which is not our part, but by rendering ourſeves ſo agreeable to her, and contributing ſo aſſiduouſly to amuſe her, as may reconcile her to a rational life.

This, I confeſs, appears to me no eaſy taſk, for ſhe is not only wild and giddy to a great degree

degree, but ſeems to value helſelf much on being ſo, and to feel a ſovereign contempt for every other perſon. She appears by no means deficient in parts. Her face is pretty, and her figure genteel, though ſomewhat under the middle ſize. She is entirely free from the aukwardneſs uſual at her age, and indeed looks older by ſome years than ſhe is, which Mrs. Wheatley, when miſs was out of the room, obſerved to Mr. Le Maine, who eſcorted her hither, and he allowed it; but aſſured her there was no deceit in that point; attributing her womanly appearance in part to an early growth, (for he ſays that no addition has been made to her height ſince ſhe was thirteen, from which time ſhe has been treated by others, and looked upon by herſelf, as a woman) and partly to bad hours, and the fatigues of diſſipation, which have already faded the roſes in her cheeks. "How "ſo! cried Mrs. Wheatley, I ſee no defi- "ciency of that kind; for ſhe has rather "too much colour." I allow it, replied Mr. Le Maine, but the roſes ſhe now wears are ſuch as you, madam, may have if you pleaſe to purchaſe them; the colour you ſee, ſhe has ſubſtituted to the ſoft bluſh of youth; and this is what in great meaſure makes her appear older than ſhe is; for though the red is fine, yet it has only the glaring brightneſs of a fine complexion, without the gen-

tle

tle delicacy we might expect from ſixteen. Mrs. Wheatley ſhook her head and lifted up her hands, crying, "What a burden, "ſir, have you laid upon me! what ſhall I "do with this poor child!"

"Every thing, madam, replied Mr. Le "Maine: the character I have heard my wife "give you, and the behaviour of the young "ladies under your care, give me hopes that "from your hands I ſhall receive a niece "equal to my moſt ardent wiſhes. Do not "be diſcouraged at her appearance; let the "thought of the folly and unhappineſs, from "which your inſtructions may reſcue her, "animate you in the arduous underſtanding; that I know is an all powerful conſideration with you."

"If flattery is ever excuſable, anſwered "Mrs. Wheatley, it muſt be when the intent is to encourage us in the performance "of ſome laborious, but right action. Therefore, ſir, I ſhall paſs over the underſerved "compliment you make me, and only wiſh "you may in time find reaſon to think any "part of it is due; but you have, I fear, ſet "my a taſk above my power."

Indeed the good lady ſeems truly uneaſy; ſhe intereſts herſelf ſo deeply in the welfare of all her ſcholars, that ſhe looks on this as a very ſerious affair. Miſs Le Maine, at her

firſt entrance made a ſliding curteſy, caſt a very contemptuous glance on us all, and ſat down without farther ceremony. Mrs. Wheatley ſaid, " I hope, madam, you are " not tired with your journey." " Oh! immenſely! replied the young lady," throwing herſelf back in her chair. " The roads were " good I imagine, madam, ſaid the other." " Oh! no indeed, ſhockingly bad, quite " dreaful, anſwered miſs Le Maine. How " ſo, cried Mr. Le Maine, I thought them " very good. For any thing I know, return- " ed his niece, they may be very good for " country roads." Mr. Le Maine ſmiled. Mrs. Wheatley looked upon the ground. " You have not been long out of London " I ſuppoſe, madam, ſaid the youngeſt miſs " Wheatley." Not long! an eternity! cried miſs Le Maine, in the higheſt key of exclamation. Down dropt Mrs. Wheatley's eye-lids again, her daughters ſtared, and I found ſome difficulty in keeping a proper compoſure of features, which were in greater danger of being diſturbed by the ſurprize of thoſe good women, than by the expreſſions that occaſioned it; as you know, madam, they could not be new to me, who left in London ſeveral acquaintance, that had adopted the ſame faſhionable ſtile. " Perhaps, " miſs Wheatley, ſaid Mr. Le Maine, you

" may

" may not know that my niece by a eterni-
" ty means three months. The young la-
" dy's converſation ſometimes requires a
" little explanation; ſhe is fond of the ſuper-
" lative."

In this manner our new companion ſhone throughout the evening, to the amuſement I believe of ſome, while our good and ſenſible governeſs ſeemed to ſuffer a great deal of uneaſineſs, till ſhe conducted her to a room, which one of miſs Wheatleys is to ſhare with her, I imagine with a deſign of preventing too quick an intimacy of the ſcholars, as they might thereby be led into imitation.

Mrs. Wheatley prevailed with Mr. Le Maine to promiſe to ſpend the two enſuing days here, as his authority might be of uſe, if the young lady ſhould find any unwillingneſs to ſubmit to the rules of the ſchool.

The next morning, when breakfaſt was over, Mrs. Wheatley deſired Miſs Le Maine to read to her, as the firſt was always a day of examination. — " Do your then imagine
" Mrs. Wheatley, that I cannot read."—
" Pardon me, madam, I ſhould be very
" much ſhocked if I imagined any ſuch
" thing: not to read perfectly well at your
" age would be ſtrange indeed; but in this
" examination we keep to a general rule."
She then put Stanyan's Grecian hiſtory into her

her hands, that being the book lying neareſt her. Miſs read on with ſeeming fluency, leaving out ſome words, altering others, without emphaſis, without pauſe, intirely regardleſs of ſtops or ſenſe, till ſhe came to ſome proper names, at which ſhe puzzled ſome time, and then threw down the book, crying, "I never met with ſuch ſtrange words "in my life, do you call this Engliſh?" Yes, my dear, very good Engliſh; if they are new to you, I ſuppoſe you have never read any hiſtory. "Indeed, but I have; as I live, I "believe I have read a thouſand hiſtories: "let me ſee, I have read the hiſtory of Jen- "ny and Jemmy Jeſſamy, the hiſtory of "Betſey Thoughtleſs, the hiſtory of Henri- "etta, the hiſtory of Jack Connor, the hiſ- "tory of Lindamira, the hiſtory of ſir Laun- "celot Greaves, the hiſtory of Peregrine "Pickle, the hiſtory of Lydia, the hiſtory "of——Enough, enough, miſs Le Maine; "you may ſpare yourſelf the trouble of re- "peating any more names; none of thoſe "are what I call hiſtory, and I am extremely "ſorry to hear you have read ſo many."— "So am I, indeed madam, I would give the "world I had not read them, that I might "have the immenſe pleaſure to come; but "I remember them ſo exceſſively well, that "when I read them a ſecond time, they ſcar- "cely divert me; for you know, when one

"is

" is acquainted with the *denouement*, the pre-
" ceeding adventures intereſt one but little;
" for example, the *embaras* of two lovers."—
" Spare me your example, my dear, if you
" pleaſe; and be ſo good as to read a few pages
" in this French book."—" A French book!
" I cannot read French."-" Not read French,
" miſs Le Maine; in the little time you have
" been here, I have heard you uſe ſeveral
" French expreſſions." — " That may be;
" one learns thoſe from hearing them ſpoke
" by others, there is no talking without
" them; I hate a converſation without
" French, even if I do not underſtand the
" words."—" I am glad, my dear, you are
" ſo partial to the language, you will learn
" it with greater pleaſure."—" Yes, if it can
" be ſoon done, I ſhall like it immenſely,
" for ſome of my acquaintance have told me
" ſuch charming adventures out of French
" books, as made me long to read it; and if
" Mamma had lived, I was to have a French
" woman; ſhe had ſent to *Jerſey* for one;
" but I have not time if it is not very eaſy."
" — Not time my dear; I fancy you will
" find a great deal while you are here; ſuf-
" ficient to afford you leiſure for learning
" many more things I hope."—" Oh! but
" I have always a million of letters to write."
"—A million of letters!"—" I aſſure you,
" madam," interupted Mr. Le Maine, "my
" niece

" niece ſeldom exaggerates ſo litle as in that
" expreſſion, for the number of letters ſhe
" writes and receives is incredible. She has
" done litle elſe ſince ſhe was with us."—
" Oh! I have the charmingeſt correſpon-
" dants! I proteſt, though miſs Anna Howe
" to be ſure writers enchantingly, yet her
" letters are not comparable to thoſe of ſome
" of my friends. As for Clariſſa, her's are
" dull and ſtupid, there is no honour is excel-
" ling her."—" I am ſorry my dear, to a-
" bridge any of your pleaſures; but it is ne-
" ceſſary to tell you, that here we have two
" invariable rules, one is, that no letter is
" written in ſchool-time except to parents;
" the hours of receſs, you may, if you pleaſe,
" employ in that manner; but the other rule
" is, that, except the letters to and from
" the parents, all you write or receive muſt
" be read by me, or one of my daughters,
" and none can be ſent away without our
" approbation." Miſs looked extremely
blank on this information.—" Read my let-
" ters! I cannot underſtand that."—" It is
" however very intelligible, my dear, and a
" rule I never can diſpence with," anſwered
Mrs. Wheatley, with a ſeriouſneſs of coun-
tenance, and dignity of voice and manner
that awed miſs Le Maine; who however, as
ſoon as ſhe a little recovered herſelf replied;
" This is very cruel. I ſhould be glad to

" make

" make a litle alteration in your rule. You " ſhall, if you pleaſe, read all the letters that " paſs between me and my relations, if you " will on the contrary allow me a free cor- " reſpondence with my friends." " No com- " poſition, my dear," replied Mrs. Wheat- ley, " in this houſe I am abſolute. I would " on no account lay the leaſt reſtraint on the " intercourſe of letters between any of my " ſcholars and their parents, becauſe I think " they ought to have full liberty of acquaint- " ing them if they are in any particular im- " properly treated; even the moſt preſſing " intreaties of my ſcholars can not prevail " with me to inſpect many of them; though " occaſionally if they much deſire it, I do " not ſcruple peruſing one, or giving a little " aſſiſtance."

Miſs Le Maine looked indignant, but perſiſted no farther. The examination went on, not much to the honour of thoſe on whom her education has hitherto depended.

The next day ſhe commenced the regular exerciſes, not without reſiſtance; but her uncle's preſence, and the awe which ſhe already feels of Mrs. Wheatley, conquered her attempts at oppoſition; a few tears ſometimes ſtole down her cheeks, and ſhe pouted all day. I could not forbear pitying her very much, and indeed, compaſſion was ſtrongly impreſſed in the countenances of all the governeſſes,

governeſſes, who I believe never found their office ſo painful, though it is frequently attended with vexation. Application muſt appear very diſagreeable to a girl of miſs Le Maine's age, who has hitherto been accuſtomed to no other employment than to ſeek amuſement.

Mr. Le Maine took his leave this morning, and Mrs. Wheatley told him he muſt excuſe her, if his niece did not improve ſo faſt as he might naturally expect, for ſhe thought it would be adviſable to begin with lenity, and wink at her inattention, in hopes of bringing her by degrees to learn with pleaſure, for by puſhing her on too faſt, ſhe might be exaſperated. He ſubmited the whole to her prudence, and gave her the ſtrongeſt aſſurances of his eſteem and confidence. But it is time I ſhould leave this ſubject, and tranſcribe my leſſons.

HISTORICAL CATECHISM.

LESSON XXIII.

Queſt. Was is long before the Grecians enter'd into open war with the Perſians?

Anſ. Only eight years after Artaxerxes Mnemon aſcended the throne. The Grecian colonies in Aſiatic Ionia then applying

to the Lacedemonians for aid againſt the Perſians, by whom they were attacked. The Lacedemonians, who had not forgiven the ill treatment of the ten thouſand, ſent them conſiderable ſuccours under the command of their king Ageſilaus.

Q. What ſucceſs had Ageſilaus?

A. He gained a compleat victory over the Perſians near Sardis; the latter being commanded by Tiſſaphernes.

Q. What happened to him after this defeat?

A. Being accuſed of treaſon, he was, by order of Artaxerxes, (who dared not attack him openly) aſſaſſinated while he was in a bath; and his head being conveyed to the king, he ſent it to Pariſatis, at whoſe inſtigation he had been murdered; the part he had in the death of her favorite ſon Cyrus having rendered him the object of her hatred.

Q. How had Pariſatis borne Cyrus's death?

A. She at firſt concealed her reſentment; but having at divers times, and by various means, got into her power all thoſe who had in any degree contributed to Cyrus's death, ſhe cauſed them to be executed in the moſt cruel manner. At length, growing jealous of the influence of Statira, Artaxerxes's queen, had acquired over him, ſhe poiſoned her; which put a period to the too great power of this cruel woman; for when Artaxerxes

taxerxes became acquainted with this laſt atrocious crime, he confined her to the city of Babylon; not ſuffering her to come any more to his court.

Q. Who was appointed to command the Perſians after the death of Tiſſaphernes?

A. Tithrauſtes, the perſon who murdered him. This new general prevailed with Ageſilaus to change the ſeat of the war and march into Phrygia, by promiſing to leave the Grecian cities in peace, on condition that they paid the uſual tribute to the king of Perſia, adding to this promiſe many preſents, the more effectually to prevail on Ageſilaus.

Q. To what may be attributed the peace of Antaleydes, ſo advantageous to the Perſians, whereby this war was ended?

A. In great meaſure to the jealouſy the Spartans had conceived of Athens, on ſeeing it reſtored by the vigilance and care of Conon, the Athenian, to its antient ſplendor.

Q. What were the conditions of this peace?

A. That the Perſians ſhould enjoy the ſovereignty of the Grecian colonies in Ionia.

Q. In what war did Artaxerxes Mnemon next engage?

A. In one with Evagoras king of Salamin in Cyprus, who had acquired a ſovereignty over almoſt all that iſland.

Q. What claim had the Perſians on the iſland of Cyprus.

A.

A. Teucer, at his return from Troy, built the city of Salamin, and his deſcendants reigned there till diſpoſſeſſed by a Phœnician, who for his better ſecurity ſubjected his little kingdom to the king of Perſia; and during the reign of this uſurper Evagoras, the right heir of the line of Teucer was born.

Q. How did Evagoras recover the throne?

A. His uncommon virtues and ſhining talent at firſt raiſed ſome apprehenſions in the tyrant, but Evagoras's great integrity and modeſty gained his confidence.

Q. What uſe did he make of the confidence ſo gained?

Q. He preſerved an inviolable fidelity to him. But a citizen who had a worſe title, but more ambition, killed the tyrant, and ſeizing Evagoras deſigned to put him to death, the more eaſily to aſcend the throne.

Q. How was this deſign fruſtated?

A. Evagoras made his eſcape into Cilicia, where aſſembling fifty perſons, who agreed to ſhare his fortune, he returned to Salamin, and expelled the uſurper, though ſupported by the Perſians.

Q. How did he behave after he got poſſeſſion of the throne?

A. He rendered his little kingdom extremely flouriſhing by his extraordinary virtues.

Q. What was the ſucceſs of his war with Artaxerxes?

A.

A. Artaxerxes took from him his new conqueſts, but left him in quiet poſſeſſion of Salamin, on condition of paying him tribute: and Evagoras lived about 12 years after in the greateſt tranquility, health and proſperity, and to the laſt excelling in every virtue.

LESSON XXIV.

Q. What was thought to be the occaſion of Artaxerxes's death?

A. Vexation, at ſeeing the fatal effects of the diſſentions which ambition bred between his ſons. Darius the eldeſt, having conſpired againſt him was put to death, and his third ſon, Ochus, contrived to make one of his brothers poiſon himſelf to avoid his father's anger, with which Ochus's emiſſaries threatened him; and he cauſed another of his brothers to be aſſaſſinated.

Q. Is any thing more conſiderable related of Artaxerxes?

A. He engaged in a war without much ſucceſs againſt the Egyptians, during which great part of his dominions revolted, but were eaſily ſubdued.

Q. When did Artaxerxes Mnemon die?

A. About three hundred and fifty nine years before Chriſt?

Q. Who ſucceeded Artaxerxes Mnemon?

A.

A. Ochus.

Q. In what manner did Ochus begin his reign?

A. He concealed his father's death till he had aſſured himſelf of the ſucceſſion; and then, to remove all competitors, put to death above an hundred of his brothers and ſiſters, the natural children of Artaxerxes; and cauſed one of his uncles, with an hundred of his children and grand-children, to be ſhot to death with arrows, for no other offence than their being highly eſteemed by the Perſians. On many other perſons he executed the like cruelty.

Q. What ſucceſs had Ochus in war?

A. He ſubdued Phœnicia and Cyprus, which had rebelled, and entirely conquered Egypt.

Q. Who then reigned in Egypt?

A. Nectanebis, who was reduced to fly into Ethiopia, where he died, and Egypt ceaſed to be an independent kingdom.

Q. In what manner did Ochus die?

A. As ſoon as his wars were over, he gave himſelf up to debauchery and indolence, leaving all power in the hands of Bagoas an Egyptian, who at laſt murdered him.

Q. What induced Bagoas to murder one under whom he enjoy'd ſuch uncontrouled power?

A.

A. Ochus, angry with the Egyptians for having likened him to an aſs, cauſed their god apis to be killed in ſacrifice to an aſs. This Bagoas was reſolved at a convenient time to revenge, and not only killed him, but cauſing his body to be cut to pieces, he gave it to cats to eat, and turned his bones into handles for knives and forks.

Q. What becames of Bagoas after this murder?

A. He placed the crown on the head of Arogus, or Arſes, Ochus's youngeſt ſon, and put his elder brother to death; but finding Arſes not ſo eaſily impoſed upon as he expected, he ſlew him, and raiſed Darius Codomanus to the throne.

Q. Was Darius of the blood royal?

A. His mother Syſigambis is ſuppoſed to have been a daughter of that uncle of Ochus's, who, with 100 of his children and grand-children, Ochus cauſed to be ſhot with Arrows.

Q. Did Darius enjoy the throne peaceably?

A. No; he was ſcarcely ſeated upon it before he was attacked by Alexander the great, choſen general of the Grecian forces, and in the 2d year of his reign was defeated by him near the river Granicus, though his troops were above five times as numerous as Alexander's army.

Q. What ſucceſs had Darius afterwards?

A. He received another great overthrow near the city of Iſſus in Cilicia. He eſcaped by flight; but this camp, with his mother, wivers, daughters, and all the principal ladies of the kingdom, who attended their huſbands, were taken.

Q. In what manner did Alexander treat them?

A. He behaved to them with the utmoſt reſpect and generoſity.

Q. How did Darius act after this defeat?

A. He propoſed peace to Alexander in very haughty terms; which were refuſed with ſtill greater haughtineſs; whereupon Darius, levying freſh troops, was again defeated by Alexander near Arbela, and reduced to fly.

Q. What ſucceſs had Darius in the flight?

A. Beſſus, governor of Bactriana, who commanded the greateſt part of the troops that accompained Darius in his flight, conſpired with one of the principal Perſian nobles to murder Darius. This being diſcovered by ſome Greeks that accompanied the king, they intreated him to truſt the care of his perſon with them.

Q. Did Darius comply with this requeſt?

A. No; he replied that he had rather be betrayed by his ſubjects than ſuſpect them, and that he ſhould have lived too long if he lived

lived till his Perſians were deſirous of geting rid of him.

Q. What was the effect of this generous confidence?

A. Beſſus and his accomplices ſeized him, and bound him with chains of gold, leading him towards Bactriana.

Q. Did they reach that province?

A. No; Alexander overtook them before they got thither: when they found he approached they endeavoured to perſuade Darius to leave his chariot, and fly with them on horſe-back; but he refuſed to accompany ſuch traitors, and rejoiced that Alexander would ſoon revenge on them the injuries he had received.

Q. What effect had this anſwer?

A. It exaſperated them to ſuch a degree, that after giving him many mortal wounds, they left him to die alone; where he was found by a Macedonian ſoldier, of whom he requeſted ſome drink; after which he deſired him to make known to Alexander the gratitude he felt for his treatment of his wives, &c. and the ſincerity with which he prayed for his proſperity and ſucceſs; and died juſt before Alexander came to the place where he lay.

Q. What effect had this ſpectacle on Alexander?

A. It drew tears from his eyes. Having

cauſed his body to be embalmed, he ſent it to Syſigambis, Darius's mother, to give it funeral honours.

In Darius ended the Perſian monarchy.

DIALOGUE on RELIGION, Continued.

TELL me, my dear, what conſolation God was in his infinite mercy pleaſed to give Adam, when by his offence he had forfeited Paradiſe, and the happineſs he there enjoyed?

Schol. When God told him that he was now become ſubject to ſin and death, and muſt henceforth earn his bread by the ſweat of his brow, that is by care and labour, ſo melancholy a change, together with the tormenting conſciouſneſs of having brought all this not only upon himſelf but on his poſterity, by diſobeying his moſt bountiful and gracious Creator, appearing a miſery almoſt beyond what human nature could ſupport, it pleaſed God moſt mercifully to tell him that in time many of theſe evils ſhould be remedied, and that from Eve (the cauſe of all this diſtreſs) would be born one, who ſhould in behalf of mankind conquer ſin and the power of the devil (for that is meant by bruiſing the ſerpent's head) and beſtow on them that immortality to which, had it not

been for Adam's ſin, we have reaſon to believe they would have been tranſlated, without the intermediate ſufferings of ſickneſs and death. This conſolation enabled Adam to ſupport his miſery; and God renewed this promiſe from time to time to good people, for their comfort, and to keep alive the expectation of the coming of the Meſſiah, that is Jeſus Chriſt.

Gov. A wonderful proof of the goodneſs of God to unworthy mankind! and particularly to the firſt offendes, whoſe guilt he, in his great mercy, was pleaſed to pity. But his compaſſion appears even in the articles of puniſhment; for death and labour, to which they now became expoſed, were bleſſings; for wicked as mankind have ever ſince been, they would probably have been ſtill worſe, had not the ſhortneſs of life, and the neceſſity of labour been the conſequence of man's firſt fall. Idleneſs is ſeldom innocent, indeed can never be ſo, as time is a great talent entruſted to us, of which we muſt give a ſtrict account. But beſide the omiſſion of the duty incumbent on us, of employing it well, we ſeldom fail, if we have no proper employment, of filling up the vacuity with criminal purſuits. Labour is therefore our beſt preſervative; whether it be mental or corporeal, ſtill it buſies our faculties, prevents the

mind from imagining wickedneſs, and reſtrains the hand from perpetrating it.

Sch. But people of fortune have not this preſervative?

Gov. Indeed, my dear, they ought to have it. No one is exempt from labour, though they may omit their duty; and when they do, the effects are but too viſible. He who directs, as well as he who executes, has a laborious employment. Thoſe who have moſt attendants have the heavieſt labour, if they acquit themſelves as they ought. It is their duty to inſtruct, to watch over their ſervants; to reſtrain them from vice, to encourage them in virtue, to teach them by example and precept; to provide for the welfare of their ſouls, and the health of their bodies. The rich by the number of their attendants only change the labour, and he who has moſt of them, if he does his duty, has the moſt laborious taſk.

Sch. You would almoſt make one fear being rich?

Gov. If we ſaw it in a right light it would certainly excite no ſmall apprehenſions in us. How juſtly ſhould we fear that the ample power of gratifying our vanities and our vices, may lead us into the free indulgence of them! How dangerous is every opportunity of folly or diſſipation, when we can ſo little depend on ourſelves for the power of reſiſting

reſiſting the temptations which ariſe in every ſtep of the vain and giddy! Every folly in a perſon whom birth or fortune has rendered conſpicuous is an extenſive evil; their example is contagious, and leads many others into the ſame pernicious courſe.

Sch. Are they accountable for that unhappy conſequence of their errors, if they do not deſign to influence others?

Gov. Certainly. He who made us rational and thinking beings, did not intend that we ſhould act without thought. He requires every one to be uſeful to mankind as far as his influence extends; and to employ his talents for that purpoſe. Negligence and careleſſneſs in matters of any conſequence to ourſelves or others are crimes, as they are omiſſions of the great purpoſe for which thought and reaſon are beſtowed upon us. We are not only accountable for the bad we do, but for the good we omit. Our great aim ſhould be to contribute to the good of others. Whatever care we may take to call off our attention from our own intereſts, we need not fear but they will engroſs a ſufficient portion of our care; indeed, far too much; ſelf will not be neglected. It is a ſufficient buſineſs through life for the moſt watchful perſon, to keep a tolerable ballance between ſelf-love and ſocial. Let them do their beſt; how often the ſcale of ſelf-love will prepon-

derate, only thoſe can imagine who have ſtrenuouſly endeavoured to keep the ballance even.

Sch. But yet, madam, we ſee many neglect their intereſt. The prodigal loſes ſight of it when he is reducing himſelf to beggary; the miſer forgets it while his body is waſting with care, anxiety and needleſs penury.

Gov. The inſtances which you object, appear to contradict what I have ſaid from the different ſenſes in which we uſe the word intereſt; I meant it only in the ſenſe generally received in the world, you include under it what it ought to expreſs.—Wiſdom has ſtamped one meaning upon it; cuſtom another. True intereſt is indeed much neglected; but from error, not from generoſity, it ſuffers only from the more alluring call of imaginary pleaſures; the glaring colours in which theſe appear to the diſtempered mind are too dazzling to permit it to dwell on the ſober proſpects of wiſdom. Reaſon is our ſafe guide, ſenſe is the ignis-fatuus which leads us aſtray; therefore that part of the world (how much the greateſt!) who live to ſenſe, and not to reaſon, muſt miſtake their true intereſt. Their views extend no farther than the preſent moment; paſſion leads them on from one imaginary pleaſure to another; promiſes, the joys of the next hour, ſhall compenſate for the diſappointment of

the

the preſent; whilſt intoxicated by hope, they grow inſenſible to the conſequences of their fruitleſs and pernicious purſuits. This is at leaſt the caſe with the prodigal, the voluptuary, the ambitious, and the vain.

Sch. The miſer ſeems not drawn from his true intereſt by preſent pleaſure.

Gov. As the errors of thoſe I have mentioned ariſe from ſtrong and indulged paſſions, the miſer's ſeem to ariſe from an abſence of paſſions or affections. Without private attachments, or public regards; with an heart too cold either to feel for particulars, or for the bulk of mankind, he is totally indifferent to the good of others. Uninclined to ſenſual pleaſures; ſtimulated by no paſſion to expend his money, in the purſuit of its gratification; as the heart of man, can no more than his mind, remain quite vacant, he comes to place his affections on the coin, which is of no value, till it has loſt that ſhape in which he is determined to preſerve it. The firſt ſet of men we have ſpoken of, from too ſtrong an attachment to their favourite views, grow to love nothing elſe; on the contrary the miſer becomes biggoted to his idol, becauſe he is indifferent to all other things, and therefore is of all others the moſt incorrigible; for, as laſting changes muſt proceed from the heart, what alteration can

we hope from him whoſe heart is incapable of any impreſſion?

Sch. I plainly preceive, madam, that ſelfiſhneſs is the cauſe of man's neglecting his true intereſt.

Gov. It may, to the inconſiderate, ſound paradoxical; but it it a certain fact. Selfiſhneſs is the foundation of every evil in our lives; and can there be a ſtronger reaſon, my dear, for the care which I obſerved was ſo neceſſary to ſuppreſs it? All ſuffer by it, but none ſo much as ourſelves: it is the direct oppoſite to the nature of Him who made us, therefore muſt be the very reverſe of virtue and happineſs. We cannot too ſoon begin to ſuppreſs all attention to our own gratification, and to turn it to that of others; the effort will not long continue painful; we ſhall ſoon find that the greateſt pleaſure conſiſts in pleaſing. A ſatisfaction ariſes from it which we feel in expectation, in poſſeſſion, and in reflexion.—'Tis ſuited to all times; the future, the preſent, and the paſt. Therefore, to come back to the point from whence we ſet out,—to do good to others to our utmoſt power, is our happineſs as well as our duty.

Sch. But how can a girl like me, who has neither money or power, do good?

Gov. It is a privilege of which no age, no ſituation, deprives us; though the means and opportunities may thereby be rendered unequal.

unequal. Every time you act properly, you confer a very essential good on your parents; and those who love you. When you behave with humility and good humour to your servant, or shew compassion to the poor and unhappy, you make them contented with their inferiority, and chear their hearts. Various are our wants, and as various our consolations. The most necessitous do not suffer so much from the pain of hunger as from distress of mind; the relief of the first you must leave to those who have money to dispense; but you may do your part towards alleviating the greater suffering by the gentle soothings of compassion. It is with our misfortunes as with other burthens.—No one can bear a share of them without lightening our load. Leave to others to relieve the body, and do you apply your care to alleviate the sorrows of the mind, as far as your power can reach; compassion that only appears in words, is a mockery of the unfortunate, from such as might shew their sense of what they fruitlessly lament in substantial services; but in those who have no other means, such participation gives real pleasure. In performing the duties suitable to your age, you not only give sincere joy to every worthy observer of your conduct; but, what is far above all, you please your Creator; you obtain his love, secure his favour, for your future

future years; and plead, in the moſt powerful manner, for the aſſiſtance of his grace, towards the encreaſe of thoſe virtues which are yet but in their infancy.

Sch. I am obliged to you, madam, for the pleaſure of knowing I can do good; the notion that my actions were indifferent in their nature while I continued in my childhood, gave me a careleſſneſs about them, which I hope will never again take place.

After tranſmiting to you a leſſon on ſo important a ſubject, ſhould I lengthen my letter by any additions of my own, all I could ſay, would appear ſtill more trifling than uſual; therefore I will conclude with a ſerious and important truth, that I am, my dear Mamma, your moſt dutiful and affectionate daughter,

MARIA MILTON.

LETTER XV.

From Mrs. Milton to her Daughter.

My dear Maria,

I ſhould tire you with the frequent repetition, were I to tell you how much I think myſelf obliged by your unwearied diligence and punctuality in writing to me: for do not imagine, my dear, that becauſe I am your mother, I am leſs ſenſible of an obligation; obedience

obedience may be your duty, and to ſome affection I have no doubt a juſt claim; but when I conſider my title in this reſpect is only what is common with moſt other mothers, I ſhould ſee myſelf in a very bad light, if I was not ſincerely (I may ſay tenderly) grateful for your uncommon attentions, and affectionate behaviour towards me. Duty may be exacted, but love is a free gift; and as ſuch I receive yours.

Your account of miſs Le Maine diverted your grand-father; though it was with ſome difficulty I perſuaded him that it was not a mere imaginary character; ſhe is ſo different from the modeſt, diffident, demure miſſes, of his days, that he was little inclined to believe ſuch an one exiſted. "When baſhfulneſs," ſaid he, "is a greater ornament to youth "than even beauty, is it poſſible any parent "can ſuffer a girl to acquire a flippancy and "pertneſs, which expreſs at once both con-"ceit and aſſurance?" His retired life for many years paſt has made this appear incredible to him; and ſo, it muſt appear to any man who forms his ideas on the ſuggeſtions of reaſon, rather than on obſervation and example. Nothing is more directly oppoſite to modeſty than pertneſs, and when I hear a girl called *ſmart*, I always want to change the word to *aſſured*, which would be ſtill more expreſſive of the truth. Cuſtom

has

has freed young women from an obligation to abſolute ſilence; they are no longer expected to ſit like mutes, or at moſt to anſwer in monoſyllables; but they turn a deſirable liberty to a diſadvantage when they are forward to converſe; when they are flippantly pert, or gravely dogmatical. If they endeavour to be, as they call it, witty, or ſolemnly to ſit in judgment on books or manners, they certainly act out of character. Opinions, formed on ſo little experience and knowlegde as a young perſon can have acquired, ſhould be advanced with diffidence, becauſe it is highly probable they are erroneous; but if they ſhould happen to be juſt, they can have had ſo few opportunities of diſcovering that they are ſo, as can not excuſe a deciſive air. I would have a young perſon communicate every thought that ariſes in her mind to a parent, as by that means it may be confirmed, or rectified, before ſhe produces it to others; and it is her parent's duty to watch over the manner in which ſhe does it; to preſerve that gentleneſs and pleaſing diffidence which excuſes error, and gives a merit to good ſenſe. Indeed, there are very few ſubjects on which a young woman may not with propriety converſe in moſt companies, if ſhe does it in ſuch a manner, as makes it appears, that ſhe is rather deſirous to learn from enquiring into the ſentiments

of

of others, than ambitious of declaring her own; and if ſhe had real good ſenſe, or the ſmalleſt portion of humility, this will be indeed her aim. I have often ſeen a young girl render herſelf ridiculous and contemptible to a company, whoſe admiration ſhe imagined ſhe ſecured, when her only fault has lain in quickneſs of ſpeech, ſharpneſs of voice, and pertneſs of countenance; for had the ſame things been uttered with gentleneſs, mildneſs of voice, and modeſty of manner, ſhe would effectually have gained the approbation ſhe ſo unſucceſsfully aimed at. Nor can theſe faults be charged on an exceſs of youthful vivacity, they ariſe only from an affectation of it; and are by no means neceſſary to the reality, that may ſometimes give a young perſon an air of rather too much levity, when either ſhe is naturally lively to exceſs, or that her companions infect her with ſome ſhare of their gaiety, even to the baniſhing for a time all thought and reflection. This unbridled vivacity is certainly a misfortune, ſince it leads into errors, which though not ſtrictly ſpeaking criminal, yet may render a whole life unfortunate; and a young woman may for many years become a prey to melancholy reflexions, becauſe ſhe acted one day without thinking, or reflecting at all. This conſideration ſhould induce every young perſon to endeavour to reſtrain her

her vivacity within proper bounds, leſt a diſpoſition, which if prudently tempered is certainly a bleſſing, may by want of caution be rendered a misfortune. Such are the dangers attending youthful vivacity; pertneſs and conceit are no part of it; therefore I would not have any perſon attempt to plead it in excuſe of thoſe faults; on the contrary it is accompained with an air of innocence, which excuſes many of the errors ariſing from it. The very lively are apt to think too little; the conceited are always thinking of themſelves. This ſhews ſo ſtrong a difference as ſurely may prevent their being confounded; and almoſt inclines one to wonder that any one ſhould imagine pertneſs, which ſo ſtrongly bears the mark of conceit, can be miſtaken for vivacity; it is a very bad mimickry of what cannot be imitated.

But one of the errors of a diſſipated age is the deſire of appearing more lively than we are. When giddy tumultuous pleaſures are thought the only road to happineſs, that conſtant aim to which no one attains, every thing ſolid is looked upon as deſpicable. All think it their firſt buſineſs to divert, and be diverted. Wit and humour conſequently are preferred to good ſenſe and judgment, and people approve in others, and themſelves attempt the former, at the expence of the latter. It is impoſſible to conceive any thing more

more hurtful than his error; it totally corrupts our underſtandings, and perverts our manners; for every thing ſerious is neglected, often deſpiſed; rectitude of principles appears formal and dull, and is therefore avoided, and frequently ridiculed; decency and regularity of conduct is deemed ſtupidity; matters of importance are diſregarded, while trifles are conſidered as momentous; and the whole order of things totally ſubverted; and yet the point aimed at is not obtained.

Every one (except the few who from ſome defect of organs are rendered idiots) have ſome ſhare of good ſenſe, generally a very ſufficient portion for their occaſions, if they endeavoured to cultivate it; therefore, if they made that their ſtudy they might be ſure of a good ſhare of ſucceſs; but wit is the portion of only a few; and cannot be obtained by thoſe on whom nature has not beſtowed it; the moſt ſtrenuous endeavours will never give wit; thoſe who in this reſpect ſtrive againſt nature, can riſe to nothing higher than pertneſs, if I may uſe the term *riſe*, to arriving at the loweſt thing imaginable, a poor mimickry of a talent generally pernicious, never eſtimable; that may ſometimes divert us, but can never obtain our eſteem; and Providence by the ſparing hand with which it has diſpenſed it, ſeems to ſignify to us how little it is to be deſired; for the greateſt

greateſt bleſſings are given with bounteous plenty; like the enlivening rays of the ſun, or refreſhing rains, beſtowed on all mankind.

Another conſideration, which ſhould direct us in the choice of our purſuits, is the conſequence of failing in the attainment of the end we aim at. When we endeavour to attain a thing really eſtimable, though we ſhould fail in the attempt, the intention was laudable, and our labour though unſucceſsful is honourable. This is the caſe, when we aim at acquiring any virtue, or uſeful improvement of our underſtandings; we have, in reality, as far as we have endeavoured, done our duty, and are more commendable than thoſe who have made no ſuch attempt; but if thoſe who aim at ſo unneceſſary, (I might venture to ſay ſo undeſirable) a talent as wit, fall ſhort of it, they have nothing to expect but contempt. If a bricklayer, who is climbing a ladder, falls down and breaks a limb, he is a worthy object of compaſſion; but will not a man, who meets with the like accident by attempting to fly from the top of a ſteeple, be rather deſpiſed and laughed at than pitied? The one ſuffers by an accident, which befel him while he was buſied in an uſeful employment, the other by a very probable conſequence of an undertaking neither profitable to himſelf, nor beneficial to mankind. But yet perhaps, he is more excuſ-

able

able than he who aims at wit; had the flyer ſucceeded it might have done him no harm, whereas wit is apt to make the poſſeſſor envied and hated, and gives pain to others. I do not however mean to declare war againſt true wit; it is a moſt amuſing talent; but if it falls to the ſhare of a wiſe perſon, he will oftner reſtrain and repreſs, than indulge its ſallies; and it is too dangerous to the poſſeſſor to give any one reaſon to attempt to gain it; were there a poſſibility, which there is not, that their endeavours ſhould be crowned with ſucceſs.

I have dwelt, perhaps, too long on this ſubject, for I truſt, I have little reaſon to apprehend your failing into this epidemical error; but the anxious concern I have for your welfare, makes me fear all poſſible evils, and deſirous of taking all methods of preſerving you from them. If, therefore, I have wearied you, my dear Maria, excuſe it for the motives ſake, and lay it all to the tenderneſs of maternal love, which may render too apprehenſive your moſt affectionate mother.

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LETTER XVI.

From Miſs Milton to her Mother.

My dear Mamma,

HOW very kind you are to encreaſe the joy I feel in writing to you, by telling me, that my diligence in that reſpect gives you pleaſure. This is indeed a means of making it a moſt delightful employment to me; for is it poſſible any other thing could make me ſo happy, as knowing I give any gratification to one, to whom I owe every thing that the wiſeſt and tendereſt parent can beſtow on a child? Very ſmall are the returns I can make to your goodneſs, but you kindly accept of trifles as the only acknowlegement in my power. Yet give me leave to ſay, I have ſome reaſon to complain of you, is it poſſible you can believe I could be weary of reading any inſtructions you are ſo good as to give me? I aſſure you, my dear Mamma, I peruſed your letter not only with due attention, but with great pleaſure, and moſt ſenſibly felt your kind care, in the cautions it contained againſt an error, into which, after all you have ſo juſtly urged, I hope I can never fall. Miſs Le Maine ſtill continues the object of our attention. Mrs. Wheatley, who

who varies in ſome degree her plan of education, as the different geniuſes and diſpoſitions of her ſcholars ſeem to require, takes a contrary courſe with miſs Le Maine, from what ſhe purſues with any of the reſt. She ſays, ſhe has no hopes of making her in any degree learned, but ſhall only aim at giving her rational notions; and even theſe muſt for ſometime be mixed with amuſement, for if ſenſe enters her head, it muſt be by ſurprize; the appearance of a formal intention to inſtruct would fright her. But, in reality, to amuſe her does not ſeem eaſy, for ſhe yawns miſerably over every thing ſhe reads. Parity of age, and an acquaintance with London and its diverſions, has recommended me to her favor; ſhe aſſiduouſly ſelects me from the reſt; and the governeſſes have begged me to encourage her advances, as they think I am not in the ſame danger of imitating her manner as the younger ladies might be; and that an intimacy with an obedient ſcholar may be of ſervice to her. They have been ſo good as to trace out to me in what way I may uſefully correſpond with their endeavours to conquer her affectation; and I ſhall perform my part to the beſt of my power; believing that I therein act in obedience to your excellent inſtructions, though ſuch ſervices may not yet be eſteemed by her as benefits; but I remember you told me, that

generous

generous perſons find ſufficient reward in the conſciouſneſs of having proved uſeful to others; and that only the ungenerous want to have their ſervices acknowleged. As French is the conſtant language here, ſhe muſt for her own eaſe and comfort learn it, but we are all forbid teaching her any exclamation in that language, or words adequate to her Engliſh ſuperlatives.

This morning ſhe told me ſhe had written a letter, which ſhe ſuppoſed her governeſs would not like, who ſhe was ſure always began in ſtarched and ancient form, with, "yours I received;" "the pleaſure your "obliging letter gave me, dear madam," or ſome ſuch ſtiff phraſe; but ſhe ſhould produce it notwithſtanding, for ſhe had no idea of being frighted out of her ſtile. I could ſee even through this declaration an expectation of being admired, and that I ſhould mortify her if I did not aſk to ſee it. She gave it me with joy, telling me ſhe thought eaſe was the beauty of writing. It began thus. "As ſure as I am alive, my "dear Fanny by this time thinks I have "been carried away by ſome recreant knight, "confined in a hideous caſtle by ſome vile "magician, or more faſhionably taken a "trip to Scotland in a poſt-chaiſe or horſe. "No ſuch matter upon my honour, my dear; "though that ſame thought of the herſe has

"immenſe

" immenſe charms for me, and I could envy
" the ſprightly girl who firſt thought of the
" expedient, if the adventure had not been
" ſo ſhockingly abridged as to conclude at
" Barnet. No raviſhing knight neither have
" I met with; but as for the hideous caſtle,
" my dear, there is ſomething in that. I do
" not think you will believe me, ſhould I
" ſwear to you, what has occaſioned this in-
" finite ſilence of mine, for poſitively it is
" above a week, an age, ſince I wrote to
" you; but believe me or no, I will tell you
" that my ſage uncle and aunt, I ſuppoſe,
" becauſe I did not talk in proverbs, and
" old ſaws, took me for ſuch a baby, that
" they have ſent me to a boarding-ſchool,
" abſolutely a boarding-ſchool, at my full
" maturity of age. How you muſt laugh;
" methinks I hear you, and I laugh too.
" But you will pity me too, my dear; had it
" been a London-ſchool it would have been
" charming, in compariſon with my uncle's
" dull houſe, but it is a thouſand miles from
" that dear town, I verily believe. Not
" that I have looked much about me: I did
" indeed go to the window the firſt morn-
" ing after I came, but I ſaw nothing but
" horrid green fields, covered with bulls,
" and cows, and ſheep, and horſes, and ſuch
" kind of creatures; ſo I ran to the other
" end of the room as faſt as I could from

" the

" the odious proſpect. I juſt ventured to
" day to peep out of a window at the other
" ſide of the houſe, but there I ſaw only a
" garden, which I find the folks here are
" ridiculouſly fond of, becauſe it is as tawdry,
" though not near ſo pretty as a millener's
" window, being filled with flowers of all
" colours; however, I like this better than
" the fields. Now you will wonder why; ſhall
" I tell you? it put me in mind of our ſweet
" Colonel; don't you remember what he
" ſaid to me one day, when he found me at
" my toilette, about Narciſſus's falling in
" love with himſelf, and being turned into
" a flower; I thought if gardens were fur-
" niſhed by ſuch changes, that if I could but
" bring them back again to gentlemen and
" ladies, what an immenſe aſſembly I could
" make. Lady Gatherum's fulleſt rout
" would be a deſart in compariſon to it;
" what delightful crouding and ſqueezing
" there would be! Oh, the thought is en-
" chanting! but, heavens! it is but a dream;
" they ſtill remain tawdry flowers, dazzle
" my eyes moſt ſhockingly, and make me
" ready to die with their odious perfumes.
" To be ſure theſe people have no nerves,
" or they muſt expire; they ſeem very good
" ſort of people though, and I know none
" I could like better in the capacity of
" ſchool-miſtreſſes; only they will ſee my

" letters,

" letters, and that is diſagreeable enough;
" it may be vaſtly well for their young
" ſcholars, but really, in regard to me, it is
" quite ridiculous. Perhaps when they ſee
" I know how to write without being look-
" ed over, they will ſpare themſelves that
" trouble. Dear creature, write to me ſoon,
" I die for a letter from you; let it be very
" long, and tell me all the news of the dear
" town: Yours eternally, &c." In this copy of miſs Le Maine's letter, my dear Mamma, I have forborn puzzling you with her falſe grammar and bad ſpelling; as in both thoſe reſpects ſhe is ſo ingenious, that to copy her letter exactly would have been a tedious taſk, as I muſt have examined the original at every word I wrote. Miſs Le Maine, when ſhe thought ſhe had gained my confidence by ſhewing me her letter, told me, that, though ſhe concerned herſelf little about Mrs. Wheatley's cenſure, yet ſhe had rather ſave the old lady the trouble of peruſing it, and fancied, if I would aſſiſt her, we might, for a ſmall reward, prevail with one of the maids to ſend it privately to the poſt. I did not expect to influence her by repreſenting the impropriety of ſuch a conduct, but aſſured her all her endeavours would be unavailing; that the ſervants were honeſt, and would diſcover the attempt; and Mrs. Wheatley be extremely angry on many accounts;

and on none more than the endeavour at corrupting the honeſty of her ſervants, which ſhe thought it her duty to be careful to have ſtrengthened, inſtead of undermined, while in her ſervice. I then repreſented, as well as I was able, what Mrs. Wheatley would ſay, and how much miſs Le Maine would be aſhamed at having done a thing ſhe could ſo little defend; all the time founding my advice on my longer acquaintance with Mrs. Wheatley; forbearing to lay any claim to a greater ſtrictneſs of principles, leſt what I ſaid might wear an air of reproach, and repreſs the freedom of her confidence, which poſſibly may be of uſe to her, and I ſhall not acquaint our governeſſes with her deſign of bribing a ſervant; it might excite a prejudice againſt her. She ſhall at leaſt enjoy the credit of having freely communicated a letter, which few would have had courage to preſent to a governeſs. Mrs. Wheatley took the letter; I watched her countenance while ſhe read it; and plainly perceived ſhe thought it a ſtrange compoſition; yet ſhe could not ſometimes quite ſuppreſs a ſmile; at others a frown came more voluntarily. She then laid it on the table by her, telling miſs Le Maine that ſhe could not have leiſure to correct it till ſchool broke up. When the time came, and none remained in the room but miſs and myſelf, ſhe reſumed the

ſubject

ſubject. She told miſs Le Maine, that ſhe hoped ſhe ſhould not mortify her if ſhe took the liberty of altering her ſtile. "You have "ſome imagination, my dear," continued ſhe, "and I make no doubt, but you will "in a little time write very well. Hither-"to your taſte has been corrupted, and that "perhaps by a very proper rule, that the "epiſtolary ſtile ſhould bear a very near "reſemblance to our converſation; more "correctneſs may be expected, but the ſame "eaſe ſhould be preſerved. This rule, how-"ever, is only good to thoſe who ſpeak with "propriety, and for ſuch only it is meant! "you have acquired a great number of cant "words, which you uſe on all occaſions, "though they are of a ſort that can ſeldom "be properly introduced. This is a na-"tural conſequence of converſing much "with thoſe who have adopted them; it is "almoſt inevitable, or I am ſure your good "ſenſe would have preſerved you from this "impropriety. To correct this fault in diſ-"courſe is a work of time; but as we write "with more care and attention than we "ſpeak, and can on reviſal blot out one "word, and ſubſtitute another, it is not dif-"ficult to mend the language we write. If "you pleaſe, my dear, we will examine your "letter together, and expunge the ſuper-"latives with which it is crouded. But

" I muſt firſt obſerve to you another error, " not uncommon with young ladies of your " age, who pique themſelves on writing. " Eaſe is the thing they ſeem particularly " to aim at, and this they carry to a degree " of affectation. Now I muſt beg you to " obſerve that affectation is the very con- " trary to eaſe; nothing is eaſy but what is " natural. As ſoon as affectation enters any " perſon's ſtile, eaſe is baniſhed, and the ſtif- " feſt, ſtarched production, that ever came " from the pen of a formal pedant, is not " more oppoſite to eaſe, than frequently the " letters of thoſe who particularly affect eaſi- " neſs. I believe the beſt method will be to " write this letter over again; I will pre- " ſerve the thoughts, though I ſhall endea- " vour to ſhew you that many of them are " erroneous; but while you err in your way " of thinking, it muſt naturally appear in " in your letters. Time and reflexion will " rectify your opinions, only do not imagine " that my conſenting to let them remain " the ground-work of your letter, is a proof " of my approbation." Mrs. Wheatley then proceeded to the epiſtle, expunged the exclamations and ſuperlatives, and turned it into an eaſy ſtile, free from the affectation of familiarity; palliating this mortification with ſeveral obliging expreſſions to her ſcholar, and enlivening it with ſeveral humourous obſervations, which entertained miſs Le Maine, while

while they repreſented to her ſome of the abſurdities in her letter, in a manner more convincing than if the expreſſions had been more ſerious; and the young lady gained no ſmall honour by the patience and complacency with which ſhe bore the criticiſm. — She appeared likewiſe to great advantage on our dancing-day, for ſhe really dances charmingly, and plays a few air on the hapſichord prettily, though not without affectation, and is entirely ignorant of the grounds of muſic. All the education ſhe has had extended only to her hands and her feet; no attempt has been made to improve her mind; on the contrary, various things have concurred to corrupt it.

How much more inclined I am to attend to the folly of others, than to my own buſineſs; I have written many pages about miſs Le Maine, but not yet tranſcribed a line of my leſſons; to which, however, I will now proceed. ——

HISTORICAL CATECHISM.

LESSON XXV.

The Hiſtory of Egypt.

Queſt. Who was the firſt king of Egypt?

Anſ. The Egyptians pretended that their ſceptre was ſwayed by a ſucceſſion of Demi-

Gods, (as Oſiris, Orus, and ſome others, whom they ranked amongſt their deities) long before the creation of Adam; but, I believe, Menes is allowed by all to have been the firſt mortal that reigned there; and therefore we may proceed on a ſuppoſition, that he was indeed their firſt king; but when he lived appears very doubtful. Some ſuppoſe him to have been Cham, the ſon of Noah; others Mizraim, the ſon of Cham; who after the diſperſion of mankind, which followed the confuſion of languages at Babel, went into Africa; and there are chronologers of good authority who place Menes much later.

Q. We cannot pretend to determine a point, upon which the learned have ſo long diſagreed; therefore we will paſs over in ſilence a contention, which, though a matter of curioſity, is amongſt thoſe curious reſearches that are in reality of ſmall conſequence, eſpecially if we conſider the impoſſibility of clearing up obſcurities, darkened by the ſhade which ſo long a courſe of time has thrown over them. What actions are aſcribed to Menes?

A. When he aſcended the throne, the whole country of Egypt, except Thebais, was a moraſs. He diverted the courſe of the Nile, and built the city of Memphis in the ancient bed of that river. He made two lakes without

out the walls, and is alſo ſaid to have erected the temple of Vulcan within the city. To him is attributed the firſt inſtitution of religious worſhip, and the ſoftening the ſavage manners of the Egyptians into what, then at leaſt, appeared ſome degree of magnificence and luxury.

Q. Who ſucceeded Menes?

A. This is likewiſe a point undetermined; we have the names of ſeveral kings, but few of their actions recorded. It appears moſt probable, that it was during this time that Egypt was invaded by the Arabians, or ſome of the neighbouring nations, who ſubdued the Lower Egypt, and long kept poſſeſſion of it. Theſe uſurpers were called ſhepherd kings, either becauſe they were really of the lower rank of people, or from the contempt which the conquered Egyptians conceived for them.

LESSON XXVI.

Q. Are none of the princes who reigned in the Upper Egypt mentioned, during the continuance of the ſhepherd kings?

A. Yes; ſome few are diſtinguiſhed in that almoſt general obſcurity. Buſiris is firſt taken notice of: he is ſaid to have built Thebes,

and to have made it the ſeat of his empire. Oſymandyas reigned a conſiderable time after him; and in his mauſoleum, a moſt ſumptuous building, he left a laſting memorial of himſelf.

Q. Was the Buſiris you have mentioned, the prince ſo famous for his cruelty?

A. No, madam; that Buſiris was brother to Seſoſtris; his power ſeems to have been confined to the banks of the Nile.

Q. Who poſſeſſed the Egyptian throne after Oſymandyas?

A. His deſcendants enjoyed the ſceptre for eight generations, the laſt of whom was named Uchoreous. He is ſaid to have rebuilt, or at leaſt to have enlarged and fortified Memphis, and to have made it the ſeat of his empire, which Thebes had before been. After him reigned Saſychis, the ſecond Egyptian legiſlator.

Q. What king is next mentioned?

A. Meoris, or Myris, though acknowleged to have lived long after; he made the lake that bore his name, and erected the two pyramids which ſtood in the midſt of it.

Q. Do not ſome hiſtorians take notice of a queen?

A. Yes, madam; one whoſe name was Nitocris: ſhe is particularly diſtinguiſhed for her great beauty, and by having erected the third great pyramid. A king, named Thethmotis

motis is likewiſe recorded for having expelled the ſhepherd kings out of the Lower Egypt.

Q. What is ſaid of Amenophis?

A. Some ſuppoſe, it was in his reign that the Iſraelites departed out of Egypt, and that he was the prince who periſhed in the Red Sea. Others imagine Seſoſtris to have been their firſt oppreſſor, and place their Exodus in the reign of his ſon Pheron.

GEOGRAPHICAL CATECHISM.

Queſt How do you find the latitude and longitude of any particular place on the globe?

Anſ. By bringing the place ſpecified cloſe to the eaſt ſide of the brazen meridian, the figure it then touches ſhewing the latitude; and the figure on the equator, which the meridian in that poſition of the globe then croſſes, gives us the longitude.

Q. Pray find out the ſun's place in the ecliptic on any particular day: the 10th of May, ſuppoſe, for example?

A. I muſt firſt find the 10th of May, in the circle of new ſtile, on the wooden horizon; and then looking upwards, in the circle of the ſigns, which is the neareſt the globe, obſerve the degree of the ſign which

is juſt over the day of the month, for there the ſun is on that day; and by this progreſs I learn, that the ſun is then in the ninth degree, twenty-eight minutes and half, of Taurus; I muſt then find the ſame degree of that ſign on the ecliptic.

Q. Now pray, tell me the length of that day in any particular place; London, for example?

A. After marking with a patch the ſun's place on the ecliptic, and having elevated the pole to the latitude of London, I muſt bring the patch to the eaſt ſide of the brazen meridian, and ſet the pointer or index of the globe (the hour circle placed at the northern extremity of the globe) at twelve o'clock; and then turn the globe round towards my left hand, till the ſun's place, marked by the patch, touches the horizon, which ſhews the time of the ſun's riſing. The hour index then will point at twenty-two minutes paſt four o'clock: from that hour to twelve at noon, is ſeven hours and thirty-eight minutes; which making half the day, if we double it, we ſhall find the whole day conſiſts of fifteen hours, ſixteen minutes; as the night contains the reſt of the twenty-four, it is plainly eight hours forty-four minutes in length. It is to be obſerved that I reckon the twilight into the night, ſuppoſing the day to begin at ſun-riſe, and end at ſun-

ſet,

ſet; but on the tenth of May the twilight begins about half an hour paſt one in the morning, and does not end till about half an hour after ten at night.

Q. How do you know the length of the twilight?

A. It continues till the ſun gets eighteen minutes below the horizon; and begins in the morning, when the ſun gets within the ſame diſtance from the horizon.

Mrs. Wheatley tells me, it is lucky that my former education had left me ſo much leſs to learn than the reſt of her ſcholars, or I could not have had time to write my dear Mamma ſuch long letter. Indeed, it would be impoſſible, did ſhe not ſuffer me thus to employ the hours, that my ſchool-fellows ſpend in things that I had been taught before I came hither. Believe me, dear madam, your moſt dutiful and affectionate daughter,

MARIA MILTON.

LETTER XVII.

My dear Mamma,

I fanſy you will be glad to ſee that this letter, inſtead of being filled with tedious relations of puerile actions, will contain little beſide ſome hiſtorical exerciſes; part of the hiſtory

hiſtory of Egypt, which we read yeſterday and to day, having furniſhed ſeveral ſubjects. The firſt was the peculiar method taken by Seſoſtris's father, to attach a certain number of young men to his ſon, which was performed in the following manner.

Amenophis, the father of Seſoſtris, having dreamt that Vulcan appeared to him, and aſſured him his ſon ſhould be lord of all the earth, deſirous as far as was in his power to facilitate the completion of a dream, which he believed prophetic, and judging that nothing could more contribute to the ſucceſs of a general, or the wiſe adminiſtration of a king, than faithful and affectionate ſoldiers, and ſagacious and upright miniſters, collected all the male-children born on the ſame day with his ſon, and cauſed them to be bred up together; in hopes that the conſtant companions of his youth would be the firm friends of his riper years. They were alike inured to application of mind, and fatigue of body; they were inſtructed in all the learning of that age, and taught every kind of martial exerciſe; in all which their prince bore an equal ſhare, nor was he, any more than his companions, permited to taſte food till he had performed a courſe of about 22 miles. Mrs. Wheatley obſerved, that Amenophis had a right notion of the force of education. "We do not find," ſaid ſhe, "that

"he

" he collected only the children of the nobili-
" ty for his ſon's future friends and attend-
" ants; he, on the contrary, took the leaſt
" means of making them all noble, and that
" truly ſo, not by honorary diſtinctions de-
" rived from their parent, but intrinſic merit.
" Children are apt to inherit ſome ſhare of
" their parents diſpoſitions, though perhaps
" got more from example than birth, there-
" fore I will not ſay that people nobly born
" may not ſometimes have nobler ſouls than
" their inferiors; but I am perſuaded that,
" in general, mental ſuperiority is more ow-
" ing to education than to blood: it is uſu-
" ally called a ſecond nature, and certainly
" in its effects is often more powerful than
" nature herſelf. Can we find a ſtronger
" argument why parents ſhould make the
" education of their children the chief ob-
" ject of their care? They have indeed
" given them exiſtence, how much then is
" it their duty to take the only means of
" making that exiſtence a bleſſing, by edu-
" cating them in ſuch a manner as ſhall im-
" prove their underſtandings, cultivate their
" virtuous diſpoſitions, and correct all that
" is vicious in them. By this means a no-
" ble mind is formed, and thus the ſon of a
" peaſant may become far more noble than
" a cotemporary monarch."

II.

II. The ſubject of the next writing-exerciſe was the reception Seſoſtris met with on his haſty return into Egypt, on hearing that his brother Armais had uſurped his throne. —— Though Seſoſtris's nine years abſence had encouraged Armais to ſeize the crown, yet when he ſaw him return, laden with the ſpoils of conquered kingdoms, and accompanied with a prodigious number of captives, he forbore an open reſiſtance; and, depending on the coward's favorite reſource, (ſecret treachery) received him with the moſt fallacious appearances of ſubmiſſion and joy. He invited the king, the queen, and all their children to a banquet, of which they partook ſo liberally, as removed all caution and ſuſpicion out of their minds, and in imaginary ſecurity they retired to reſt.

Armais had contrived to have dried reeds laid round the royal apartment, and theſe he cauſed to be ſet on fire when they were aſleep. Seſoſtris awakened by the crackling of the reeds; and finding his guards, who had been as liberally feaſted as himſelf, were too much intoxicated to aſſiſt him, firſt ſupplicated the Gods to protect him and his family, and then ruſhing through the flames, was followed by his wife and children. This event ſo well convinced him of his brother's treachery, that he expelled him the kingdom.

III.

III. This morning another young lady was desired to give an account of the manner in which Sesostris treated his royal captives; and this she executed as follows:

Sesostris's behaviour to his captives but ill agrees with that disposition which rendered him an indulgent father to his lawful subjects. It is said, that he was wont, on some days of public ceremony, to cause his chariot to be drawn by captive kings; and this custom he seems to have continued without remorse, and therefore we may almost venture to say without reflexion; till one day, that he observed a king, thus ignominiously employed, looking back very stedfastly on one of the chariot wheels, curiosity induced Sesostris to ask the cause of so particular an attention: to which the captive answered; "The motion of that wheel, oh! king, brings "to my mind the vicissitudes of fortune; "for as every part of the wheel alternately "possesses the highest and the lowest place, "so it is with men, who sometimes in one "day fall from the throne to the most ab-"ject slavery." This reflexion so sensibly affected Sesostris, that he laid aside this insolent and infamous practice, and ever after treated them with the utmost humanity. It is very strange, said Mrs. Wheatley, on reading this exercise, "that a prince, "who gave so many eminent proofs of wis-

"dom

" dom and virtue, ſhould never have reflect-
" ed on the viciſſitudes of fortune, nor have
" felt compaſſion for men ſo juſtly the objects
" of it. This ſhews us how ſtrongly pow-
" er and grandeur intoxicate the wiſeſt men;
" their whole attention is apt to be ſo fixed on
" their own greatneſs, that they become in-
" ſenſible to the diſtreſſes of others, or the
" fatal effects they may themſelves in time
" experience of the inſtability of human af-
" fairs. When we, therefore, conſider Sef-
" oſtris as a man thus inflated with proſperi-
" ty, we cannot wonder, that in the latter part
" of life, having loſt his ſight; a misfortune
" which muſt reduce the greateſt monarch
" to a ſtate in ſome reſpects ſo dependant,
" as his haughty ſpirit could not patiently
" ſupport, he ſhould put an end to a life,
" which appeared inglorious to him, who
" was not ſufficiently enlightened to ſee,
" that the trueſt magnanimity appears in
" a patient ſubmiſſion to the misfortunes
" which the Supreme Being pleaſes to inflict."

IV. The ſecond writing-exerciſe of this day, was an account of the means taken by Actiſanes to ſecure the Egyptians from the numerous robbers wherewith they were infeſted.——When Actiſanes, king of Ethiopia, aſcended the Egyptian throne, he found the manners of his new ſubjects extremely corrupted by the bad government of ſome preceding monarchs; great numbers of peo-

ple

ple ſupported themſelves by robbery and rapine, to the great detriment of the more honeſt Egyptians. This evil he determined to redreſs; and did it in a manner, which at once does honour to his wiſdom and humanity. He commended an exact ſearch to be made for theſe lawleſs people throughout the kingdom, and when they were collected together, and on a fair trial convicted, he cauſed their noſes to be cut off, as a mark of their guilt, which muſt for ever prevent their inſinuating themſelves into innocent ſocieties, and ſent them into the remoteſt parts of the deſart, on the Syrian ſide of Egypt; where he built them a town; deſigning that the great difficulty in procuring there the neceſſaries of life, on account of the entire barreneſs of the place, ſhould force them into conſtant labour; and by preventing idleneſs, preſerve them from the many crimes of which it is too often the parent. Mrs. Wheatley obſerved, that this ſtory inculcated a moſt uſeful truth, for that virtue and induſtry are ſo cloſely connected, that there are few inſtances of their exiſting ſeparately; "The firſt, eſpecially," ſaid ſhe, "is not to be found without the latter; virtue is an induſtrious performance of the "commands of God; an indolent perſon "may have few vices, but alſo muſt have "few virtues; for virtue is an active prin-

"ciple,

" ciple, and muſt be very weak in thoſe,
" whom it does not excite to a vigorous and
" induſtrious purſuit of every thing right
" and laudable. Induſtry, indeed, may
" ſometimes be found without honeſty, but
" that is ſeldom the caſe, where it has not
" proved ſo ſucceſsful, as to have gained
" ſome degree of corrupting riches; and
" this in labours where the mind is more
" employed than the body. It cannot be
" denied, that natural depravity will lead
" ſome to ſeek more than honeſt gain; but
" corporeal labour, where the utmoſt in-
" duſtry can only procure the neceſſaries of
" life, will frequently even reform the bad,
" and ſeldom fails of preſerving the in-
" tegrity of the honeſt; as conſtant employ-
" ment keeps them out of temptation, and
" their hardy life preſerves them from that
" enervating ſoftneſs, which inclines people
" to ſenſual pleaſures, the great inſtigators
" to diſhoneſty. Actiſanes, therefore, in
" fact, gave happineſs by the puniſhment
" he inflicted, for to be virtuous is to be
" happy; and were I in words few enough
" to make a poſy for a ring, to give to any
" one the beſt advice for preſerving their in-
" tegrity, it would be contained in this ſhort
" ſentence, Be buſy. This renders it ſo de-
" ſirable for perſons whoſe fortunes exempt
" them from corporeal labour, to learn ſuch

" mental

" mental employments as may ſerve to fill " up their time; for riches muſt ceaſe to " be a bleſſing when they are the occaſions " of idleneſs. Among mental employments " I include all arts; for although theſe are " executed by the hands, yet the plan is in " the mind." Many people would think, my dear Mamma, that by giving ſo prolix an account of every thing ſaid or done here, I deſign to ſhew I have profited by ſuch inſtructions, and muſt ſtand totally clear of the charge of indolence, ſince I deſcend to an unneceſſary minuteneſs; for certainly to no one could a repetition of Mrs. Wheatley's advice be ſo uſeleſs as to you, who never waſte a moment of your time; but I have a peculiar pleaſure in recollecting inſtructions ſo like what I have received from you; and find that by recalling them to my mind, I fix them more deeply on my memory. Had I conſidered that my leſſons will be longer than common this poſt, as I am to day to inſert a portion of the religious dialogue, I ſhould perhaps have had ſelf denial enough to have abridged the latter part of this letter.

HISTORICAL CATECHISM.

LESSON XXVII.

Q. The Egyptian hiſtorians ſeem, in their accounts of Seſoſtris, to have made up for their ſilence concerning his predeceſſors; for as the actions of the greateſt part of them were buried in oblivion, to him they have been laviſh almoſt beyond probability; therefore pray give me ſome particulars of his life?

Anſ. In his father's life-time he ſubdued Arabia, and the greateſt part of Africa; but as ſoon as he came to the crown, his ambition thought every aim too low, that fell ſhort of univerſal conqueſt.

Q. What were the meaſures he purſued for this purpoſe?

A. He foreſaw that the enterprize he meditated muſt occaſion a long abſence from his kingdom, and therefore thought it neceſſary, before his departure, to ſettle the goverment on a ſtable foundation, and to ſecure the affections of his ſubjects. To this end he divided the kingdom into thirty-ſix nomes or provinces, aſſigning to each a governor; and appointed his brother Egyptus, or, as ſome call him, Armais, ſupreme regent;

diſtributed

diſtributed great donations among his people; paid the debts of all who were inſolvent, and diſtinguiſhed himſelf by every act of mercy and benevolence. Having thus ſettled the affairs of his kingdom, he ſet out on his expedition, attended by 1700 young men, who had been bred up with him, and an immenſe army, and large fleet, the firſt ever built by the Egyptians.

Q. Which way did he firſt direct his courſe?

A. To Ethiopia, which he conquered; then ſubdued Troglodytica, all Aſia, and ſome part of Europe; but there his progreſs was ſtopped; for when he was in Trace, he received an account that his brother, encouraged by his long ablence, had aſſumed the diadem, which obliged him to return home, leſt, while he was conquering foreign kingdoms, he ſhould loſe his own. His brother, conſcious of his inferiority in power, did not attempt to reſiſt him, and Seſoſtris drove him out of the kingdom.

Q. You will meet with him again, when you read the Grecian hiſtory, for Armais is ſuppoſed to be the Danaus, or Egyptus of the Greeks; who, on being expelled Egypt, fled to Greece, and ſeized Argos.

Q. What means did Seſoſtris take to perpetuate the memory of his conqueſts?

A.

A. He raiſed pillars in every country he conquered, with an inſcription engraven on them to this purpoſe, "Seſoſtris, king of "kings, and lord of lords, ſubdued the "country." But where the people had ſubmited without reſiſtance, he inſerted ſome expreſſions denoting their cowardice; and on the contrary where they had defended themſelves with particular bravery, he left teſtimonials of their valour. In ſeveral places he erected ſtatues of himſelf.

LESSON XXVIII.

Queſt. What account have we of Seſoſtris's actions after he was peacebly ſettled in his kingdom?

A. He erected a temple in every city in Egypt; on each was an inſcription teſtifying that it was built without the labour of a native, captives only being employed by him in thoſe works. To prevent the incurſions of the Arabians and Syrians, he fortified the eaſt ſide of Egypt with a wall near an hundred and ninety miles in length. He raiſed a great number of very high mounts, whereon he built towns, and removed to them the inhabitants of ſuch villages, as by their low ſituation were expoſed to danger or loſs from the overflowing of the Nile. He

cut

cut navigable canals from that river, to facilitate the tranſportation of merchandize from Memphis to the ſea.

Q. Who ſucceeded Seſoſtris?

A. Pheron, his ſon, who inherited his father's misfortune, but not his fame; for we know little more of him than that he was blind. After this prince we are again left in ignorance of the Egyptian hiſtory, till Amaſis aſcended the throne; whoſe cruelty and avarice were ſo great, that his ſubjects, wearied with his tyranny, accepted for their ſovereign Actiſanesr king of Ethiopia, who reigned over both kingdoms with equal humanity.

Q. Who ſucceeded Actiſanes?

A. Mendes, or Marus, whoſe chief fame ariſes from the labyrinth he built for his ſepulchre. After his death the throne remained vacant for five generations, when the people placed the crown on the head of Proteus, a native of Memphis, who was reputed a great magician.

Q. At what period did he reign?

A. At the time of the Trojan war; and we are told that Paris and Helen, being driven by a ſtorm on the Egyptian coaſts, were ſeized by him, who had heard of their criminal paſſion and flight. He ſuffered Paris to depart, but detained Helen and the riches ſhe brought with her, and delivered both up to Menelaus, her huſband.

Q.

Q. Who ſucceeded Proteus?

A. His ſon Rhemphis, or Rhampſinitus, who was for nothing very remarkable but his avarice. He was followed by ſeven others, who are known to us only by their names, except Nilus, who endeavoured, by digging canals from the Nile, to render the benefits ariſing from that river more extenſive; and, as a memorial of ſo uſeful a work, the river, which was before called Egyptus, from him received the appellation of the Nile.

Q. What was the name of the ninth king from Proteus.

A. Cheops; to whom ſucceeded his brother Cephren, alike impious and tyrannical: they ſhut up all the temples, and forbad every kind of religious worſhip. Through their long reigns they oppreſſed their ſubjects in the crueleſt manner, and obliged them to undergo the moſt ſlaviſh drudgery, that they might leave pyramids behind them to ſerve both for ſumptuous ſepulchres, and to perpetuate their memories; that which Cheops erected was the largeſt Egypt could ever boaſt.

Q. It was a proper diſappointment to ſo fooliſh and ſo cruel an ambition that the bodies of neither of theſe princes were depoſited in the pyramids deſigned for them; for their relations, to avoid any indignities to which

which they might be liable, from the hatred the people bore them, interred their remains privately in an unknown place. Who ſucceeded Cephren?

A. Mycerinus, the ſon of Cheops, a prince totally unlike his father, for during his too ſhort reign he ſhewed himſelf juſt, merciful, generous, and ſtudious of his people's welfare.

RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE, Continued.

Governeſs. What were the firſt laws that God gave to mankind?

Scholar. The decalogue, or ten commandments; which, though eaſy injunctions, ſeem to have been but ill obeyed.

Gov. If you think them ſo eaſy, my dear, I fanſy you do not take them in their full extent. Do you imagine nothing more is meant by the two firſt than a prohibition of idolatry? This indeed to the Jews, who lived in the midſt of idolatrous nations, was a neceſſary command, and not the eaſieſt to obey; for man, too much governed by his ſenſes, ſeldom knows how to adore and love, as he ought, an inviſible Being, of whom his imagination cannot even frame an adequate idea; —his thoughts want ſome ſenſible object on which to reſt; and he finds the performance

of external ceremonies an eaſier taſk than the true worſhip and entire dedication of his heart. Thus the Jews were often tempted to adore viſible deities; and to fall into the ſuperſtitions of all the people that ſurrounded them: they were better inclined to worſhip an image that their hands had formed, becauſe their eyes beheld it, than to adore him who is viſible only in his works, and made themſelves and all the powers they poſſeſſed. Loſt in the contemplation of ſuch a being, they ſought for ſomething more proportionable to their comprehenſions. In this ſenſe of the word idolatry, we are, indeed, no longer in danger of falling into it: but, wherein conſiſted that ſin? Let us examine this point, and we ſhall better underſtand the nature of the commandment.

Sch. I ſuppoſe that what rendered idolatry criminal, was the addreſſing that adoration and reverence to idols, which was due only to the true God.

Gov. And what do you imagine are the proofs and conſequences of that reverence?

Sch. Love, dependance on their power, and obedience to what they may be ſuppoſed to require.

Gov. Conſequently this miſplaced reverence would lead them to pay to the deſpicable work of human art, that love and obedience, which is only due to him, in whoſe hands

hands are all the corners of the earth. But is it graven images alone, which man can ſet up in his heart, in oppoſition to his Creator? Is not every favorite vanity, every cheriſhed vice an idol? Believe me, the heart of many men much more reſembles a pantheon, than the temple of the holy ſpirit. What do they obey? What do they love? What are they ever labouring to gratify, but their follies or their vices? What elſe employs their thoughts, or excites their ſollicitude? This is modern idolatry. Neither Iſis, nor Oſiris among the Egyptians, Jupiter among the Greeks or Romans, or any deities moſt worſhipped in any other part of the Pagan world, were ever ſerved with ſuch uniform obedience, and perſevering attachment, as the ſeveral vices which are apt to creep into our natures; — and much more horrid are our ſacrifices to them; the blood of bulls and goats will not ſuffice: all human reſpects, every moral obligation, every legal tie, every divine duty, are ſacrified to our paſſions, and our vices. Be aſſured of this, my dear, every time we forget our Creator, neglect his commands for any worldly conſideration, or ſuffer any thing to come in competition with our duty to him, we as effectually break the two firſt commandments, as the Iſraelites did when they ſacrified to the golden calf, or Nebuchadnezzar's image. The heart

is the worſt temple wherein we can place an idol. It is not the bending of the knee, but the biaſs of the affections which conſtitutes true worſhip. Fame and power are the ambitious man's deity; pomp and ſtate the objects of the proud man's worſhip: the miſer idolizes his gold; the vain, and the ſenſual, have as many gods as there are vanities or pleaſures to attract or guide them. Each Pagan had his peculiar houſhold deities.—Thoſe who paſs under the denomination of Chriſtians, have theirs ſtill more intimately connected with them, who enthroned in their hearts, have altars conſecrated to them, on which ſacrifices are hourly offered.

Sch. I never conſidered theſe commandments in this ſenſe, but that ſuch is their true meaning now appear to me very obvious; and idolatry ſeems a very general vice. How difficult muſt it be to preſerve the heart from being to much fixed on things foreign from him that made it! and yet, how neceſſary?

Gov. So neceſſary, that on this depends all our preſent and future happineſs. We might as well expect a clock to go right when the principal wheel is broken, as man to perform the duties of his ſtation, when his affections are miſplaced. The heart is the ſpring of our actions; the ſource of our thoughts;—and not only from its abundance

the

the mouth ſpeaketh, but from its inſtigations the hand acteth?

Sch. To rectify the heart muſt indeed be a point worthy our moſt ſerious attention, but can we do it?

Gov. He that made it has given us ſome power, and reſerved to himſelf much more; but has reſerved it only to beſtow on us, if we uſe well what he has already truſted to our care, and are deſirous of more for the ſame purpoſe. If we apply with earneſtneſs and ſincerity to him for his purifying grace, we ſhall not be refuſed; provided we are anxiouſly watchful to rectify ſuch faults as come within our power, and to employ diligently every gradual encreaſe he beſtows on us.

I wiſh, my dear madam, it were as eaſy to make theſe religious inſtructions the rule of all my thoughs and actions, as to tranſcribe them; but this is a taſk of far greater difficulty, yet I hope not unattainable; and when ſuch encouraging aſſurances of ſucceſs are given to our endeavours, it would be criminal to deſpond; and perhaps deſpair in theſe caſes ofteneſt ariſes from indolence, which prompts us to forbear the arduous attempt; and furniſhes us with falſe reaſons wherewith to gloſs over the true motive. May you be long preſerved to me! to guide and ſtrengthen

en my feeble efforts; and with ſuch aſſiſtance, what improvement in every thing laudable may not be hoped by, my dear Mamma, your moſt affectionate and dutiful daughter,

MARIA MILTON.

FINIS.

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